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The role of rare and exotic animals in the self-fashioning of the early modern court: the Medici court in Florence as a case study

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Sussex
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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature: Angelica Groom……

SUMMARY

The principal aim of this study is to investigate the role rare and exotic animals played in the cultural self-fashioning and political imaging of the Medici's Ducal and Grand-ducal Court in Florence (1531-1737). The exclusive focus on this topic will contribute to Medicean scholarship in an area of research that has hitherto received only scant and fragmentary attention. This study will provide the first comprehensive and systematic analysis of the numerous ways in which both real and depicted animals were manipulated to serve the interests of the Medici regime.

The thesis is formed of five chapters. Chapter one examines the zoological spaces established by the Medici; chapter two focuses on the procurement of animals and their use in diplomatic gift exchange. The remainder of the thesis takes the form of three case studies. These will examine a wide range of Medici-commissioned works of art, from different points in the family's history, in which unusual fauna feature as a central element of the iconography. The works discussed will make clear how individual members of the regime deployed animal imagery to express their political aspirations and courtly magnificence.

Case study one traces how early members of the Medici family used images of rare beasts to assert their dynastic and political legitimacy, primarily to a home audience. Case study two examines the role of zoological illustrations in the Medici's wider ambition to establish an international reputation as patrons of the natural sciences and to promote the court as a centre of artistic production. The final case considers a series of zoological paintings commissioned by the last two Medici rulers, to argue that the pictures reflected not only the shifting values elite society attached to unusual fauna, but that they also mirrored the decline of the regime itself.

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Archives and museums in and around Florence have provided most of the primary sources for this study. During my numerous field trips to Florence my research has particularly benefited form the efficiency and helpfulness of the staff at the Archivio di Stato di Firenze; the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze and the Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze. I owe especially warm thanks to Massimo Pivetti and other staff at the Uffizi's Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe for their assistance with images and for generously allowing me to examine and photograph a large number of the pictures that feature in this study. I am grateful also for the assistance I received from Dr. Maria Sframeli and Marta Bezzini at the Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentina. Equally helpful have been the staff at the Museo di Storia Naturale, the Sezione Zoologica "*La Specola*", Florence; the Museo della Natura Morta, at the villa Medici, Poggio a Caiano; the Palazzo Pitti; the Museo dell' Opificio delle Pietre Dure, and the Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*'.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Archives:

ASF Florence, Archivio di Stato di Firenze

ASCF Florence, Archivio Storico del Comune di Firence

BNCF Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze

GDSU Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi

IMSS Florence, Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza (now known as the Museum Galileo)

BUB Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna

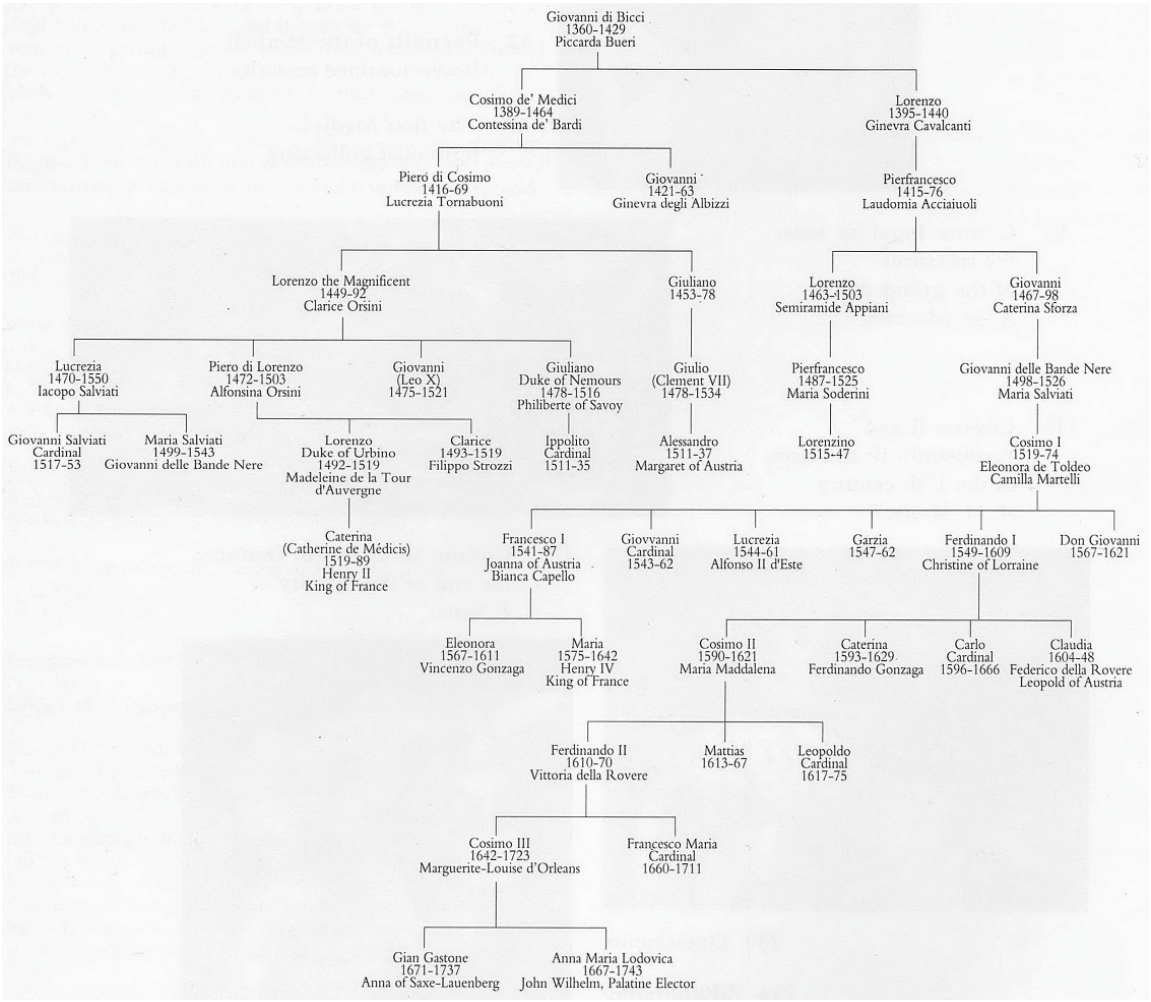
Archival Fonts from the Archivio di Stato di Firenze:

GM Guardaroba Medicea

MM Miscellanea Medicea

MdP Mediceo del Principato

MAP Medici Archive Project



The Medici Family Genealogical Tree. Source: Massinelli, Anna Maria and Filippo Tueno, *Treasures of the Medici*, New York: The Vendome Press, 1992, p.6.

INTRODUCTION

Part I

Introduction of the thesis and rational for deploying the Medici court as a case study

The Medici family (see Genealogical table, p.ix) throughout their two hundred year reign, first as Dukes of Florence (from 1531-1569) and later as Grand Dukes of Tuscany (from 1569-1737), (see Appendix 1), were enthusiastic collectors of rare and exotic fauna and they distinguished themselves in their sustained and longstanding use of rare and exotic animals as a central element in the works of art they commissioned. The Florentine court thus provides an ideal context for a study devoted to an investigation of the important contribution unusual species made to the cultural life of elite society during the early modern era. Two main themes run throughout this thesis. The first is prompted by the question of what role animals - both in living form and as a subject in art - played in the Medici's representation of itself as a 'modern' court. A key line of argument presented in this study is that in Medicean artefacts wild and 'other-world' beasts were deployed by the ruling members of the dynasty as a conduit for the communication of important messages about their political, dynastic, and cultural aspirations; in short, animals became an integral part of the regime's skilful self-imaging process. The second key area of my investigation focuses on issues of pictorial representation and artistic practices in relation to the depiction of animals. The visitor guide to an exhibition of Italian Renaissance drawings, presented at the British Museum in 2010, confirmed that it is still a widespread belief that 'artistic innovation spread outwards from Florence ..., [and that a more] naturalistic trend of Renaissance art encouraged artists to ...draw more creatively from life', rather than from established models.[1] However, when it came to the depiction of animals, neither of these claims hold up to close scrutiny. Formal changes to the animal schema happened very gradually and I will show that traditional systems of representation survived for much longer than is commonly assumed.

[1] The quote is taken from the 'English Exhibition Guide' to the exhibition entitled *Fra Angelico to Leonardo Italian Renaissance Drawings*, which was staged at the British Museum (22 April-25 July 2010), The British Museum, London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 03/2010.

This study will also challenge the notion that the encounter with real animals led artists to abandon existing models. I will demonstrate that the copying of existing models remained an important aspect of artistic practice and continued into the eighteenth century (e.g. see Figs. 1-2). The idea that Florence was the driving force of artistic innovation is similarly undermined by my research: all three of my case studies offer unequivocal evidence that northern Italian and northern European artistic traditions provided the inspirational force behind many of the animalist works commissioned by the Florentine court. This thesis is therefore as much concerned with the history of the depiction of animals as it is with the history of the Medici's use of real and depicted animals to establish their own status and identity as rulers. Indeed, in many ways, the artists working for the Medici have provided ideal material for research on the evolution that occurred in the genre of animal painting. My study is the first comprehensive and systematic investigation into the numerous ways in which rare birds and mammals were manipulated to serve the interests of the Medici rulers. It aims to deepen our understanding of the operation of the Medici family and its court, while also making a significant contribution to wider research connected to the cultural use of animals and their representation in art.

Structure and organization of the material

Part II of this introduction considers issues of definition; the term 'exotic' was not one that was in general circulation during the chronological period covered by this thesis, and the criteria that defined a beast as 'unusual' or 'rare' were much wider than they are now. This raises the questions of what terminology was used to describe unfamiliar and 'other-world' fauna, and what types of animals were typically regarded as 'other' during the early modern era. I will offer a working definition of the term 'exotic' as it is used in this thesis. The rest of the argument is divided into five main chapters. Three chapters take the form of case studies that deal more specifically with artistic projects commissioned by individual Medici rulers, in which birds and mammals form an important part, or the sole content of the iconography, and which lend themselves to being interpreted in terms of the commissioners' political and cultural priorities.

Annemarie Jordan Gschwend noted that 'the formation of princely menageries and aviaries became a fundamental part of the self-imaging of Renaissance courts.[2] Chapter 1 considers briefly the historical background of this cultural trend in the Italian setting, followed by a more expansive consideration of the menageries established by the Medici court. The Florentine rulers maintained two menageries: the *Serraglio de leoni* (menagerie for lions), which was located within the urban fabric of the city nearby the convent of San Marco, and a second menagerie, known as the *Serraglio degli animali rari* (menagerie for rare species) was built later (1677) in the private setting of the Boboli gardens that form part of the family's Pitti Palace.[3] Birds and other types of fauna were also kept in some of their country villas; Pratolino, for example, featured an aviary (*voliera*). My 'reconstruction' of these zoological sites in and around Florence will draw on a range of primary and secondary literature.[4] However, the specific focus adopted in this study will be centred on the question on how the differing functions and settings of these zoological spaces help to inform the paintings discussed in my case-study chapters.

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[2] Jordan Gschwend, Annemarie, 'Exotic Animals in Sixteenth-Century Europe', in *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500-1800*, ed. by Amin Jaffer and Anna Jackson, London: V&A, 2004, pp.42-43, (p.42).

[3] In this study, the word *serraglio* will be used to denote 'menagerie' or 'zoo'. In Italian, the first use of *serraglio*, in reference to 'enclosures where princes kept diverse animals from foreign lands', first appeared in the third edition of the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1691):'Serraglio: diciamo ancora al Luogo murato, dove i Principi grandi tengon serrati diversi animali venuti da' paesi strani. Lat. *vivarium*', cited in *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, Terza Impressione (3rd. edn.), 3 Vols, Firenze: Stamperia dell'Accademia della Crusca, 1691, Vol.3, p.1510; http://www.lessicografia.it/SERRAGLIO_e_SERRAGLIA_ed3 [14/07/2011].

[4] Gurrieri, Francesco and Judith Chatfield, *Boboli Gardens*, Firenze: Edam, 1972; Zangheri, Luigi, *Pratolino, il Giardino delle Meraviglie*, 2 Vols, Firenze : Gonnelli, 1979; Mosco, Marilena, 'Animal paintings in the Medici Collections' (pp.17-22) and Maria Matilde Simari 'Menageries in Medicean Florence' (pp.27-29), in *Natura Viva in Casa Medici: Dipinti di animali dai depositi di Palazzo Pitti con esemplari del Museo zoologico "La Specola"* (exhib. cat.), Marilena Mosco, Maria Simari et al, Firenze: Centro Di, 1985; Chiarini, Marco, 'Una " Veduta del Serraglio degli animali che sono in Boboli di Firenze', in *Boboli 90: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi per la Salvaguardia e la Valorizzazione del Giardino*, ed. by Cristina Acidini Luchinat and Elvira Garbero Zorzi, 2 Vols, Florence: Edifir, 1991, Vol.1, pp.67–70; Masseti, Marco, 'Dalla "turata delle Gran'bestie" allo "Stanzone" degli agrumi: splendore e decadenza dei serragli faunistici del Giardino di Boboli, in *Boboli 90: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi per la Salvaguardia e la Valorizzazione del Giardino*, ed. by Cristina Acidini Luchinat and Elvira Garbero Zorzi, 2 Vols, Florence: Edifir, 1991, Vol. 1, pp.323–337; Heikamp, Detlef, 'Animali e piante a Pratolino', in *Studi di Storia del'Arte in Onore di Mina Gregori*, Cinisello Balsamo, Milano: Silvana editoriale, 1994, pp.130-138; Capecchi, Gabriele, 'Le "conserve degli agrumi", la grande Limonaia e il Serraglio mediceo', in *Il Giardino di Boboli*, ed. by Litta Maria Medri, Milano, Cinisello Balsamo / Silvana, 2003, pp.250-252; Del Meglio, Alessandro, Maria Carchio, Roberto Manescalchi, *Il Marzocco The Lion of Florence* Florence: Edizioni Grafica European Center of Fine Arts, 2005; Belluzzi, Amadeo, 'Il serraglio dei leoni e la cavallerizza', in *La Sapienza a Firenze: l' Università e l'Istituto Geografico Militare a San Marco*, ed. by Amedeo Belluzzi and Emanuela Ferretti, Firenze: IGM, 2009, pp.99-116.

Chapter 2 focuses on the processes of animal procurement and on the practices of animal exchange. A core group of primary-source documents from the Medici archive, which relate specifically to the topic of unusual and exotic beasts, have provided the key research material for this chapter. [5] Although the bulk of this material is available on *The Medici Archive Project* online database, this study represents the first attempt to examine the material critically and empirically, and to develop theories based on the available data. This research has allowed me to form more nuanced conclusions than have hitherto emerged regarding the types and quantities of animals that were likely to have been represented in the Medici's zoological collections and the challenges that the Medici faced in the procurement of rare fauna from distant parts of the globe.[6] One of the central premises argued in this chapter is the idea that animals were used as an essential 'tool' in the Medici's foreign policy, and in this respect Marcel Mauss's theory that the system of gift exchange was based on obligation and reciprocation has provided a valuable model for discussing Cosimo I de' Medici's (1519-74; reg. Duke of Florence 1537- 69, Grand Duke of Tuscany 1569-74) and his successors' use of animals as a valuable commodity in the forging of diplomatic relations.[7]

Chapter 3 begins my three case studies and focuses on three fresco schemes commissioned by different members of the Medici family, in which animal imagery was used to signify the Medici's political ambitions, dynastic credentials and courtly aspirations. Drawing on Patricia Rubin's notion that imagery and memory could be exploited to political effect, I will argue that animals that were especially memorable and/or that had particular and direct association with the Medici family were deployed by the

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[5] Extracts of the majority of these are available on *The Medici Archive Project* (MAP) online database: http://documents.medici.org/simple_search.cfm [accessed on a regular basis between June 2008 and September 2011]; others sources include Archivio di Stato di Firenze (ASF), Mediceo del Principato (MdP), 1132, c.209r., c.298r., c.427r., c.435r.; relevant letters written by Cesare Sardi, Cosimo III's agent in Amsterdam, ASF, Miscellanea Medicea (MM), 92, Ins. IV.

[6] Eric Baratay and Elizabeth Hardouin-Fugier, for example, make the wholly unsubstantiated claim that Lorenzo *il Magnifico* maintained a *serraglio* in which he kept 'hunting leopards, lions, elephants, bears, bulls and wild boar'. There is no evidence that the early branch of the Medici maintained a menagerie or that they possessed such beasts themselves, and even at the height of the Medici's officially sanctioned power, the Florentine menageries did not contain 'elephants', see Baratay, Eric and Elizabeth Hardouin-Fugier *Zoo: A History of Zoological Gardens in the West*, London: Reaction Books, 2004 (Paperback edn), p.19.

[7] Mauss, Marcel, *The Gift: The form and reason for exchange in archaic society*, London: Routledge Classics edn, 2002.

regime to signify these ideals.[8] Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes of the *Journey of the Magi* (1459-62) (Figs. 3a-b) at the family chapel at the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi in Florence is the first in a line of similar fresco schemes in which animal iconography was used in an overtly politicized way. My rationale for discussing an artistic commission that does not belong to the Ducal and Grand-ducal period of Medici rule is that the work was an important precedent for later frescoes that were central to Ducal/Grand-ducal image making: Andrea del Sarto's and Alessandro Allori's *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (Fig. 4), painted in 1519-82, for the *Salone Grande* at the Medici villa at Poggio a Caiano, and Giorgio Vasari's depiction of *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* of circa 1556-8 (Fig. 5) at the *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico* at the Palazzo della Signoria (later renamed Palazzo Vecchio) in Florence.[9] The two later frescoes both feature a giraffe and other exotic beasts, thereby presenting the Medici as recipients of international favours in the form of animal gifts. The graceful, long-necked African mammal had assumed a special significance in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Florentine and Medicean history, and a narrative was gradually woven around the creature to promote the idea that Lorenzo de' Medici (*Il Magnifico*) was given such an animal by the Sultan of Egypt in 1487. The story has remained unchallenged in modern-day scholarship. However, a more sensitive interpretation of the animal protagonists, in conjunction with a more critical examination of the primary evidence relating to the Egyptian diplomatic mission have demonstrated that the time-honoured myth was a fabrication, concocted by the later-generation family members to promote the idea of a seamless transition of power from one branch of the family to the other. In other words, the animals were used as a device to choreograph the regime's own history and destiny as rulers of a legitimate court.

Case study two (Chapter 4) examines the role of Jacopo Ligozzi's zoological illustrations in Francesco I de' Medici's (1541-87; reg. Grand Duke of Tuscany 1574-87)

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[8] Rubin, Patricia Lee, 'Art and the Imagery of Memory', in *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence*, ed. by Giovanni Ciappelli and Patricia Lee Rubin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp.67–85.

[9] Gozzoli's frescoes were created before the Ducal and Grand-ducal period of Medici rule; I use the work to argue that it was the first major Medici-commissioned work in which animal iconography was used in an overtly politicized way to signify the Medici's early courtly ambitions. Gozzoli's painting thus set an important precedent for the later frescoes in which rare beasts were accorded a central role in Ducal/Grand-ducal image making.

patronage of Ulisse Aldrovandi's multivolume *Natural History* and the paintings' later deployment as a source of inspiration for the creation of Ferdinando I's de' Medici's (1549-1609; reg. Grand Duke of Tuscany 1587-1609) and Cosimo II de' Medici's (1590-1621; reg. Grand Duke of Tuscany 1609-21) new-look, naturalist-inspired Florentine *pietra dura* (hardstone) artefacts. The contexts in which Ligozzi's images were employed raise several key issues that will be explored in the chapter. Firstly, they demonstrate that the priorities of the Florentine court had shifted from the use of animals to signify the regime's political and dynastic aspirations to a locally-based audience, to the Medici's wider role in the patronage of early modern natural science projects and of the court as a centre for the manufacture of luxury artefacts. These different objectives highlight the existing tensions between 'scientific' and decorative naturalism - with the former being put in the service of categorization and classification, and the latter to being used to delight the connoisseurial eye of the prospective buyer-collector. Furthermore, the recycling of existing visual templates, which these processes involved, clearly run counter to the notion that artists and craftsmen abandoned the practice of copying. Indeed, I will argue that 'counterfeiting' assumed a new level of sophistication in Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi's copies of a number of zoological works created by his cousin, Jacopo.

In the final case study (Chapter 5) the focus shifts to an examination of a series of animal paintings that were created by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati and were commissioned to be hung in the private setting of the villa Medici Ambrogiana. The project, initiated by Cosimo III de' Medici (1642-1723; reg. Grand Duke of Tuscany 1670-1723) and continued by his son, Gian Gastone (1671-1737; reg. Grand Duke of Tuscany 1723-37), reflects yet another set of patronal values and priorities and raises different questions and issues pertaining to the use and depiction of animals. The animal paintings were part of Cosimo III's much larger enterprise to decorate the Medici's country villas with complementary series of pictures depicting the fauna and flora represented in the family's zoological and botanical collections. I will posit that this grand undertaking showed the court both as inward-looking and self-contained, because unlike the earlier projects, the emphasis was no longer on making an impact in the wider public arena, nor on promoting the common good via the sponsorship of a collective scientific enterprise.

Instead, Cosimo III's enterprise reflected the courtly realm as a self-sufficient microcosm, in which nature's bounty was collected, investigated, catalogued and visually conceptualized according to the Prince's own idiosyncratic tastes. The zoological works that Gian Gastone commissioned from Scacciati, to contribute to the Ambrogiana series will be analysed to explore the reasons why in these works scientific naturalism and pictorial mimeticism have evidently given way to a more subversive, imaginative and satirical treatment of the depicted species.

Review of Literature

Because of the expansive bibliography on the Medici family, the broad nature of this research topic and the wide chronological timeframe covered by this study, the secondary literature relating to each chapter will be taken up in the relevant sections of the argument. Here only the most relevant secondary texts are considered, especially those that relate directly to the Medici family's interests in animals and in exotica more generally, as well as the literature connected to the works and the artists discussed in the case studies. The scholarship that touches on these issues is fragmentary and incomplete, and in many instances not available to an English-speaking audience; thus one of the important things this thesis does is to draw the available literature together in order to assess it collectively and critically, and from this position to create a more coherent and comprehensive account of the role rare and exotic species played in the cultural life of the Medici.

Among the secondary literature, three texts have been instrumental to my research as a whole. These include Claudia Lazzaro's chapter on the *Grotto degli animali* that Duke Cosimo I de' Medici commissioned to be built in the garden of the Villa Medici at Castello, and which featured some thirty-six large-scale sculptures of domestic and exotic animals and numerous smaller bronze statuettes representing birds.[10] Although this much-discussed artistic scheme does not figure in my study, Lazzaro's holistic consideration of the scheme in relation to wider cultural practices involving animals has provided a valuable model for

[10] Lazzaro, Claudia, 'Animals as Cultural Signs: A Medici Menagerie in the Grotto at Castello' in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650,* ed. by Claire Farago, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995, pp.197-227.

my own research.[11] Also influential was Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi's chapter 'The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici', especially in relation to my analysis of the work of Jacopo Ligozzi.[12] Tongiorgi Tomasi's academic interests and the catalogue itself are primarily centred on the botanical arts; hence, it is Ligozzi's floral paintings that are the focus of the author's argument.[13] Nevertheless, her chapter has provided valuable insights regarding the Medici's collecting interests and their collective aspiration to promote Tuscany as a centre for botanical and horticultural experimentation and research. These activities are here treated as analogous with, and complementary to the court's sponsorship and promotion of zoological naturalism. The text that has provided the inspirational force for my study is the exhibition catalogue *Natura Viva in Casa Medici*.[14] The two short chapters by Marilena Mosco and Maria Matilde Simari, which precede the catalogue entries, have provided a useful overview of the Medici as collectors of living and depicted beasts, whereas the catalogue itself has served as a valuable introduction to various Medici artists who specialized in the genre of animal painting, including Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati. [15] Although it provided much valuable information for my own research, the catalogue's most important contribution to this study was to highlight gaps in the scholarship and identify areas that warranted further research or greater exploration.

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[11] For other literature on the grotto sculptures and the bronze birds see Châtelet- Lange, Liliane, 'The Grotto of the Unicorn and the Garden of the Villa di Castello', *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 50, No.1 (1968), 51-62; Conforti, Claudia, ' La Grotta 'degli animali' o 'del diluvio' nel giardino di Villa Medici a Castello', *Quadrini di Palazzo Te*, Vol. 6 (1987), 71-80; Bellesi, Sandro, 'Animali esotici nella pittura tardo barocca fiorentina', *Gazzetta antiquaria*, Vol. 10 (1991), 28-40; Acidini Luchinat, Christina, 'La Grotta degli Animali', in *Le Ville e i Giardini di Castello e Petraia a Firenze*, ed. by Christina Acidini Luchinat, Giorgio Galletti , Ospedaletto: Pacini, 1992, pp.108–129; Paolucci, Antonio, *The Animals of Giambologna*, trans. by Helen Cleary, Florence: Italian Ministry for Cultural Assets and Activities – Fine Arts and Historical Assets Service of Florence, Pistoia, and Prato/Giunti Gruppo Editoriale, 2000; Heikamp, Detlef, 'Uccelli di Bronzo', in *Giambologna: gli Dei, gli Eroi: Genesi e Fortuna di uno Stile Europeo nella Scultura*, ed. by Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi and Dimitrios Zikos, Firenze: Giunti: Firenze Musei, 2006, pp.249–252; Gianotti, Alessandra, *Il teatro di natura: Niccolò Tribolo e le origini di un genere: la scultura di animali nella Firenze del Cinquecento*, Florence: Olschki, 2007; Masseti, Marco, 'Sculptures of mammals in the Grotta degli Animali of the Villa Medici di Castello Florence, Italy: a stone menagerie', *Archives of Natural History*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (2008),100-104: http://www.euppublishing.com/doi/pdfplus/10.3366/E0260954108000090 [11/10/2010].

[12] Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia 'The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici', in Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, and Gretchen, A. Hirschauer, *The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici* (exhib. cat.), Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002, pp.15-107.

[13] See the section 'The Botanical Paintings of Jacopo Ligozzi', Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, pp.38-51.

[14] *Natura Viva in Casa Medici: Dipinti di animali dai depositi di Palazzo Pitti con esemplari del Museo zoologico "La Specola"* (exhib. cat.), Marilena Mosco, Maria Simari et al, Firenze: Centro Di, 1985.

[15] For the chapters see fn.4, Mosco and Simari, 1985.

Other secondary texts have related more directly to individual chapters. Chapter two, dealing with the acquisition and exchange of rare beasts, has benefited from Silvio Bedini's account of the significance exotic animals played in the forging of diplomatic relations between the Portuguese crown and the Papacy, especially in relation to the first Medici Pope, Leo X.[16] Francesca Fiorani's work on the map murals, commissioned by Cosimo I de' Medici for the *Guardaroba Nuova* of the Palazzo Vecchio, in Florence, was particularly useful in defining the Medici's conceptual awareness of global geography, whilst the available scholarship on the Medici's collections of exotic artefacts has yielded much useful information regarding the actual locations from which the Medici sourced such commodities.[17] Detlef Heikamp's scholarship on the Medici's collection of Mexican artefacts, for example, has revealed that one channel used by the regime was to exploit the familial connections with the Habsburg rulers to gain access to commodities arriving from the New World.[18]

The fresco schemes discussed in the first case study are works that have received much scholarly attention in the recent past, and as far as Benozzo Gozzoli's *Journey of the Magi* is concerned, my argument adds little new material to the existing scholarship.[19]

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[16] Bedini, Silvio, A., *The Pope's Elephant*, New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

[17] Scalini, Mario, 'Curios and Exotica in the Medici Collections' in *Treasures of Florence: The Medici Collection 1400-1700*, ed. by Cristina Acidini Luchinat, Munich; New York: Prestel, 1997, pp.145-154; Scalini, Mario, 'Exotica in der Mediceischen Kunstkammer:Bemerkungen zur Herkunftsfrage und zu ihrer einstigen Präsentation, in *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*, ed. by Helmut Trnek and Sabine Haag, Vol. 3, 2001, pp.128-43; Turpin, Adriana, 'The New World collections of Duke Cosimo I de'Medici and their role in the creation of a *Kunst- und Wunderkammer* in the Palazzo Vecchio', in *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. by R.J.W. Evans and Alexander Marr, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, pp.63-86; Loehr, George, 'The Medici and China', *Art and Archaeology Research Paper*, Vol.6 (1974), 68-77; Fiorani, Francesca, *The Marvel of Maps: Art, Cartography and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005 (especially part one, 'Maps as Worldly Art', pp.17-138).

[18] See especially her chapters 'Collecting According to Maps' (pp.67-73) and 'Cosimo I's Exotica' (pp.73-78, Fiorani, Francesca, *The Marvel of Maps: Art, Cartography and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005; Heikamp, Detlef, *Mexico and the Medici*, Florence: Editrice Edam, 1972.

[19] The bibliography is large, and I shall limit myself to the following key works: Acidini, Luchinat, Cristina, 'La Cappella medicea attraverso cinque secoli', in *II Palazzo Medici Riccardi di Firenze*, ed. by G. Cherubini and G. Fanelli, Florence: Giunti, 1990, pp.82-91; Acidini, Luchinat, Cristina (ed.), *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Florence*, trans. by E. Daunt and D. Kunzelman, London & New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994; Ahl, Diane Cole, *Benozzo Gozzoli*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996; Crum, Roger J., 'Roberto Martelli, the Council of Florence, and the Medici Palace Chapel Author(s)', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (1996), 403-417; Kent, Dale, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron's Oeuvre*, New Haven and

However, the link it traces with later works to highlight the importance even early Medici patrons attached to animal iconography to establish a courtly identity is new. My proposition that Gozzoli's work inspired sixteenth-century Medici rulers to make similar use of exotic beasts, not only to signify their princely credentials but also to establish connections between different works, challenges the common practice in arthistorical writing to appraise works in isolation. Scholarship on Andrea del Sarto's and Alessandro Allori's *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* and Giorgio Vasari's fresco of *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* has been equally polarized, and the two paintings are rarely consider in relation to each other. Moreover, scholars have tended to underplay the significance made by Allori's contributions to the *Salone Grande* fresco, especially when it comes to the interpretation of animal imagery. My specific focus on the animal iconography and the cross-references that the painted creatures invite allows me to challenge traditional accounts regarding their signification and significance.[20]

My assessment of Ligozzi's work in Chapter four (Case study two) has benefited from the scholarship of Odoardo Giglioli, Mina Bacci and Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, who are the foremost scholars to have written on Ligozzi's botanical and, to a lesser extent, his zoological illustrations. In relation to the artist's technical approach, all three authors have tended to focus on Ligozzi's stylistic innovations while ignoring the question of how the formal qualities of his work relate to past traditions in animal representation. Ligozzi came from the Veneto, and one of the objectives of Chapter four will be to consider the extent to

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London: Yale University Press, 2000; Cardini, Franco, *The Chapel of the Magi in the Palazzo Medici*, Firenze: Mandragora, 2001.

[20] On Lorenzo's giraffe see: Donati, Lamberto, 'La Giraffa', *Maso Finiguerra: Rivista della Stampa Incisa e del Libro Illustrato*, Vol. 3 (1938), 247-268; Joost-Gaugiger, Christiane, L.,'Lorenzo the Magnificent and the Giraffe as a Symbol of Power', *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol.16 (1987), 91-99; Belozerskaya, Marina, *The Medici Giraffe: And other Tales of Exotic Animals and Power*, New York: Little, Brown And Company, 2006; on Andre del Sarto see: Shearman, John, *Andrea del Sarto*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965; Kliemann, Julian-Matthias, *Politische und Humanistische Ideen der Medici in der Villa Poggio a Caiano: Untersuchungen zu den Fresken der Sala Grande*, Bamberg: Bamberger Fotodruck Schadel & Wehle, 1976 (Theses/German); Kliemann, Julian-Matthias, *Andrea del Sarto Il Tributo a Cesare (1519-1521)*, Poggio a Caiano: [s.n.], 1986; Cox-Rearick , Janet, *Dynasty and Destiny in Medici Art: Pontormo, Leo X, and the two Cosimos*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984; Bardazzi, Silvestro, and Eugenio Castellani, *La Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano*, 2 Vols, Prato: Edizioni del Palazzo, 1981; on Giorgio Vasari: Corti, Laura, *Vasari : catalogo completo dei dipinti*, Firenze: Cantini, 1989.

which the artist's zoological painting has been shaped by his northern Italian roots.[21] Questions about authorship, the recycling and copying of existing images, as well as the common assumption that Ligozzi's animal studies were painted 'directly from living models', will also be addressed in the chapter.[22] These are issues that are rarely directly addressed in the secondary literature on Ligozzi.

Natura Viva in Casa Medici, noted above, is the first among three catalogues that have published works from the Ambrogiana series of zoological paintings, which are the subject of the final case study (Chapter 5).[23] However, the scholarship in these three publications has been limited to a short catalogue entry for each work discussed. Consequently, each of these texts has tended to repeat more or less the same information, offering no more than a brief consideration of the painting's art historical context and provenance, together with a reference or a transcript of related documentation taken from various registers in the Medici archive. Relevant issues that the Ambrogiana collection raises - such as the classificatory and scientific ethos that underpinned the project; Cosimo III de' Medici's fascination for natural monstrosities; the artists' reliance on taxidermied specimens and the satirical aspects of Scacciati's paintings - are merely noted but not explored. It is these key themes that are the subject of my exploration in Chapter 7.

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[21] Giglioli, Odoardo H., 'Jacopo Ligozzi Disegnatore e Pittore di Piante e Animali', *Dedalo*, Vol. 4 (1923-24), 554-570 (pp.560-2); Bacci, Mina, and Anna Forlani, *Mostra di Disegni di Jacopo Ligozzi (1547-1626)*, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1961, pp. 18-21; Bacci, Mina, 'Laudabili imitazion: la prima enciclopedia', *KOS*, Vol. 19, Anno II, (1985/86), 43-66 (p.58); Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'L'illustrazione naturalistica: tecnica e invenzione', in *Natura-Cultura: L'Interpretazione del Mondo Fisico nei Testi e nelle Immagini: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Mantova, 5-8 ottobre 1996*, ed. by Giuseppe Olmi, Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, Attilio Zanca, Firenze : L.S. Olschki, 2000, pp.133-151 (pp.141-142); Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'The study of the natural sciences and botanical and zoological illustration in Tuscany under the Medicis from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries', *Archives of Natural History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2001), 179-193 (pp. 182-3); Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.50.

[22] Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.49; see also Conigliello, Lucilla, *Ligozzi*, (exhib. cat.), English edition, Milan: 5 Continents Editions srl., 2005, p.6.

[23] The other two catalogues are Meloni Trkulja, Silvia and Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi (eds) et al, *Bartolomeo Bimbi: Un pittore di piante e animali alla corte dei Medici*, Firenze: Edifir, 1998 (which deals exclusively with Bimbi's work), and Casciu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009 (which has published works by both Bimbi and Scacciati).

Part II
A note on the use of the term 'exotic' and defining the exotic beast

From a modern-day European perspective, the expression 'exotic', when applied to animals and plants, has come to denote fauna and flora from the continents of Africa, Asia, America and Australasia. However, in spite of the fact that the word was already in use during classical times, evidence suggests that the expression was not in common currency during the chronological period covered by this enquiry. It was the ancient Greeks who first coined the term '*ἐξωτικός'* to denote outside, outer or external (*éxō*), and in its Latinized form, '*exōtic-us'*, the expression continued to be used to define something as non-native.[24] Its appropriation and translation into European vernacular languages was slow and gradual. Eric Baratay and Elizabeth Hardouin–Fugier claim that the first vernacular use of the word '*exotique*' to describe animals and other commodities from Asia and Africa appeared in the satirical novel *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, which was written by François Rabelais (ca.1494-1553) and was published in 1552.[25] However, as Louise E. Robbins notes, the expression was not in general circulation and it remained uncommon even at the end of the eighteenth century.[26] The first Italian recorded use of *esòtico* appeared in Francesco Colónna's (1433-1527) *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499), where the link between the expressions *contemptibile* and *exotico* perhaps suggest a pejorative inflection.[27] Giovanvettorio Soderini's (1526-1579) reference to the 'uccelli exotici' ('exotic birds') kept by Marco Lelio Strabone (Strabo, ca.63/64 BCE-24 CE) is cited as the earliest use of

[24] 'Exotic, adj. and n.', OED Online, March 2011, Oxford University Press, http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/view/Entry/66403?redirectedFrom=exotic [21/05/2011].
[25] Baratay, 2004, p.29; for Rabelais's use of the term see Book four of *Panatagruel* (published in 1552), where he refers to 'divers animaux, poisons, oiseaux et autres merchandises exotiques', ('the diverse animals, fish, birds and other exotic merchandise'), Rabelais, François, *The Five Books of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. by Jaques Le Clercq, New York: The Modern Library, 1944, Book IV, Chapter 2, p.511; for a more expansive treatment on the origins and the use of the French term 'exotique', see Robbins, Louise, E., *Elephant Slaves & Pampered Pets: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002.
[26] Robbins, 2002, p.xiii.
[27] Battaglia, Salvatore, *Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, 23 Vols, Torino: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 1961-2004, Vol.V, 1995, pp.366-67; 'Tra tante celeste e dive persone [io] solo contemptibile et exotico'('Among the many heavenly and divine persons only I am contemptible and exotic'), Francesco Colónna, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, (ristampa anastatica del-l'edizione aldina di Venezia, 1499, Milano, 1963, p.356.

the word in relation to animals.[28] Pierandrea Mattiòli (1500-1577) was the first to apply the term to plants (exotic myrtles), and the reference relates to a classical text, *De materia medicea* by Pedanius Dioscorides (1st century CE).[29] Presumably in these contexts both Soderini and Mattiòli translated the word from the original Latin sources. According to the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (Florence, first edition 1612) a more 'modern' application of the term 'exotic', in relation to non-indigenous plants, is accredited to Count Lorenzo Magalotti (1637-1712), the renowned scientist, man of letters, and courtier and diplomat to the Medici.[30] However, Luigi Lanzi's reference to the 'gran varietà di fiere e di uccelli esotici' that appear in del Sarto's and Allori's *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*, seems to be the first direct application of the term to animals.[31] Thus, in the Italian vernacular, as indeed in other modern European languages, the adjective 'exotic' was not commonly used in reference to 'other-world' fauna until the early nineteenth century. This raises the question as to how early modern Europeans described and conceptualized animals that did not fit into the domain of the familiar and the known.

Describing, defining and categorizing rare beasts during the early modern period

A range of primary texts that are used in other chapters of this study, and which have direct association with the Medici, make clear how unusual and foreign animals were described in Florence during the chronological period covered by this thesis. Giorgio Vasari (1511-

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[28] 'Marco Lelio Strabone fu il primo tra i Romani chè racchiudesse in Brindizi tutte le sorti d'animali, e gl'uccelli exotici e peregrini' (Marco Lelio Strabone was the first among the Romans who kept in Brindizi all the types of animals, and exotic and wild birds'), Soderini, Giovanni Vettorio, *Il trattato degli animali domestici*, Vol. I, of his *Opere*, ed. by A. Bacchi della Lega, 4 Vols, Bologna: Romagnoli dall'acqua, 1907, (p.236); Battaglia, (1995), p.366.

[29] 'Quelli, che intessono i mirti ne i giardini, fanno di mirti domestichi più spezie: la tarentina con foglie minute, la nostrana con aperte; e la esotica densissima di foglie, compartite in sei ordini per ciascuno ramuscello' own translation ('Those, who are interested in myrtles in gardens, make of the domestic myrtle more species: the *tarentina* with minute leaves, the *nostrana* with open [leaves], the exotic [variety] with dense foliage, divide them into six orders (sections) for each twig'), Pierandrea Mattiòli, *Volgarizzamento di Dioscoride*, Venezia, 1563, p.156.

[30] The reference to exotic plants occurred in a letter Magalotti wrote to Monsignor Leone Strozzi, in January 1696, in which he states: 'M' aspetto che una volta che mi bisogni chiedervi per cultura di qualche pianta esotica, …vi risolvate a mandarmela' ('I expect that one day I will need to ask you to cultivate the exotic plants … which you resolved to give to me'), Lorenzo Magalotti, *Lettere di Lorenzo Magalotti (a Leone Strozzi, a Vincenzio Viviani ed altri)*, Firenze, Manni, 1736, p.4, cited in *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, Quinta Impressione (5th. edn.), 11Vols, Firenze: Nella Tipografia Galileiana di M. Cellini EC, 1863-1923; Vol. V (1886), p.307.

[31] 'Great variety of wild beasts and exotic birds', Lanzi, Luigi, *Storia Pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti Fin Presso al Fine del XVIII Secolo*, 6 Vols, Bassano: Giuseppe Remondini e figli, 1809, Vol. 1, p.159; *Vocabolario*, (1886), p.307.

1574) spent a large part of his working career in the service of the Medici court, and his *Lives of the Painters and Sculptors and Architects* (Florence, 1550 /1568) contains numerous references to animals.[32] When describing the fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*, it is interesting to note that in contrast to Lanzi's use of the adjective *esotici*, Vasari highlighted 'otherness' in explaining the story painted by del Sarto as representing the moment when 'Cesare è presentato il tributo di tutti gl'animali orientali'.[33] In a slightly earlier passage, he listed the animals that are shown in the fresco more fully:

> [...] alcuni papagalli, ...che sono cosa rarissima; ...capre indiane, leoni, giraffi, leonze, lupi cervieri, scimie, e mori, et ...un nano che tiene in una scatola il camaleonte, tanto ben fatto che non si può immaginare nella disformità della stranissima forma sua.[34]

The expressions *rarissima* (rare), *stranissima* (strange) and *straniero* (foreign) were fairly common words used to describe unfamiliar, non-indigenous species or simply peculiar fauna.[35] The adjective *indiane* (meaning Indian), used by Vasari in relation to the *capre* (presumably a type of African goat), was also in common use at the time. Both expressions, *orientali* and *indiane*, became fit-all generic labels applied to creatures from other Continents, especially America and Asia, which in Vasari's time were known respectively

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[32] Because an important part of this study is concerned with the terminology used during the early modern era to describe animals that we now commonly designate as 'exotic', it was important to consult relevant primary sources directly. One key text is Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*. My source of reference throughout this thesis will be his more expansive and revised second edition, known as the *Edizione Giuntina*, published in 1568: Vasari, Giorgio, *Le Vite de' piu eccellenti pittori, scultori, et architettori, scritte, & di nuouo ampliate da Giorgio Vasari. Co' ritratti loro, et con le nuoue vite dal 1550 insino al 1567. Con tauole copiosissime de'nomi, dell' opere, e de'luoghi ou' elle sono*, 6 Vols, Fiorenza: I. Giunti, 1568, available online from: http://biblio.signum.sns.it/vasari/consultazione/Vasari/indice.html. [2008-2011]. However, when referring to the *Vite*, I will also cite the more standard, nine-volume, edited and comprehensively annotated publication produced by Gaetano Milanesi between 1878 and 1885: Vasari, Giorgio, *Le Vite de' più Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori ed Architettori*, ed. by Gaetano Milanesi, 9 Vols, Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1878-1885. Henceforth, the two texts will be referenced respectively as Vasari, 1568, and Vasari 1878-1885, including relevant volume numbers and publication dates.

[33] 'Caesar is presented with a tribute of oriental animals', Vasari, 1568, Vol. 4, p.394; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, p.57.

[34] 'Some parrots, … which are rare, ... Indian goats, lions, giraffes, leopards [?], lynx, monkeys, and Moors and ...a dwarf who is holding a box with a chameleon inside, which is so well executed that it is impossible to imagine the deformity and strangeness of its shape', Vasari, 1568, Vol. 4, p.373; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, p.36.

[35] Vasari used the expression 'straniero' when describing the animals Pope Leo X kept at his Belvedere menagerie: 'il cameleonte, i zibetti, le scimie, i papagalli, i lioni, i liofanti et altri animali più stranieri' ('the chameleon , the civet-cats, the monkeys , the parrots, the lions and elephants and other most foreign animals'), Vasari, 1568,Vol. 4, p.197; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.362.

as the 'West Indies' and the 'East Indies'.[36] For this reason they are expressions that probably come closest to our modern-day use of 'exotic'. However, while such terms underlined the geographical 'otherness' of the fauna and flora, they portray a general ignorance or disregard about the places from which the animals and plants were plundered for European consumption. For example, the naturalist, Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522-1605), in numerous of his letters to his benefactors at the Florentine court, Francesco I and Ferdinando I de' Medici, used the labels *indiano* or *de l'Indie* to describe non-European animals and plants, regardless of which part of the globe they came from.[37] Thus, a 'porco Indiano ...[che] ha sopra il dorso un forame', can be identified as a New World Collared peccary, on account of the distinctive dorsal gland it has on the rear of its rump.[38] Similarly, Francesco Saverio Baldinucci (1663-1738), when referring to Bimbi's portrait of a *White Parrot*, (Fig. 1), which is actually a Salmon-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua moluccensis*) from south-eastern Asia, identified the creature as a 'bellissimo pappagallo ... dall'Indie'.[39] The archival records that relate to Bimbi's paintings are equally generalizing in their labelling of the depicted species: examples include his picture of an American *Opossum with two young* (*Didelphis marsupialis*) (Fig. 6), which is listed as an 'Animale quadrupede delle Indie' ('indian quadruped'), and the portrait of a Chinese Golden pheasant (*Chrysolophus pictus*) (Fig. 7) as a 'Fagiano d'Indie' ('Indian pheasant').[40] The general ignorance about the geographical provenance of certain species evidently also extended to 'other-world' artefacts, judging by Heikamp's observation that even though during sixteenth century the Continents of America and Asia were known respectively as the 'West Indies' and the 'East Indies', yet in the Medici inventories, the common label 'delle Indie' ('from the Indies')

[36] Heikamp, 1972, p.10.
[37] 'Uccelli Indiani' ('Indian birds'); 'animali et altre cose indiane' ('animals and other indian things'); 'animali ...terrestri dell'Indie' ('land-based animals from India'), Mattirolo, Oreste, 'Le Lettere di Ulisse Aldrovandi a Francesco I e Ferdinando I Granduchi di Toscana e a Francesco Maria II Duca di Urbino: Tratte dall' Archivio di Stato di Firenze e illustrate da Oreste Mattirolo', in *Memorie della Reale Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, ser. II, 54, 1903-1904, Torino: Carlo Clausen , 1904, pp.355-401 (pp.368/375).
[38] 'An indian pig [which] has on its back an opening', quoted in Mattirolo, Oreste, *L'Opera Botanica di Ulisse Aldrovandi (1549-1605*), Bologna: Regia Tipografia- Fratelli Merlani, 1897, p.372.
[39] 'Beautiful parrot ...from India', Baldinucci, Francesco Saverio, *Vite Di Artisti Dei Secoli XVII –XVIII* [manuscript c. 1725-1730], ed. by Anna Matteoli, Roma: De Luca, 1975, p.245.
[40] For the opossum see ASF Guardaroba Medicea (GM) ,1260 bis, cc.81v., 85r.; for the Chinese Golden pheasant see ASF, GM, 1172, c.5v.

was used to identify both American and oriental objects.[41] The imprecise labelling highlights a fundamental problem when it came to the naming and geographical provenance of exotic fauna, which is that well-known classical sources were largely silent about species from the newly discovered parts of the globe. Thus, Aristotle's (384-322 BCE) *Historia animalium,* Strabo's (c. 60 BCE-20 CE) *Geography* and Pliny the Elder's (23-79 CE) *Natural History*, which were still used as the standard texts for information on animals during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, provided descriptions, names and data about the geographical for the better-known African and some Asian species. However, no such information was available for New World animals and the rarer zoological curiosities that were introduced into Europe as a result of global seafaring exploration. As Wilma George points out, information about South American fauna and that of other remote regions of the globe was generally available only from the journals and letters of those who visited the strange lands.[42]

Other labels, such as *forestieri*, *salvatichi* (modern spelling *selvatici*) and *domestici* were also frequently used to make distinctions between foreign, wild and domestic species. Baldinucci, for example, distinguished between 'animali domestici e salvatici' in his description of the paintings Bartolomeo Bimbi created for the Villa Ambrogiana.[43] Aldrovandi, likewise, differentiated between 'animali peregrini et rari', when referring to exotic fish and a dragon, and 'fiere salvatichi' (wild beasts), in connection to pictures he had been sent from Poland depicting an 'uro' (bear?), a 'turo' (bison?) and an 'alce' (elk).[44] It is interesting to note that exactly such a separation is also implied in the two Grand-ducal menageries themselves, with the *Serraglio de leoni* serving to accommodate the larger and

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[41] Heikamp, 1972, p.10; Mario Scalini also states that the court officials who created the Medici inventories seemed unable to distinguish between American and Asian artefacts, Scalini, Mario, 'Exotica in der Mediceischen Kunstkammer: Bemerkungen zur Herkunftsfrage und zu ihrer einstigen Präsentation, in *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*, Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Vol. 3 (2001), 128-43 (p.129).

[42] George, Wilma, 'Sources and background to discoveries of new animals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', *History of Science*, Vol. 18, part 2, No.40 (1980), 79-104, (p.88).

[43] 'Ritratti di pesci, d'uccelli e d'altri animali domestici e salvatici, che servirono per la Real Villa dell'Imbogiana' ('paintings of fish, birds and other wild and domestic animals, that are at the Regal Villa Ambrogiana'), Baldinucci, 1975, p.250.

[44] Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ulisse Aldrovandi e la Toscana: Carteggio e Testimonianze Documentarie*, a cura di Alessandro Tosi, Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 1989, pp.262-63, 267 (Letters 13/14/19).

more ferocious beasts, while the *Serraglio degli animali rari* housed the rarer and more precious species.

Debra Higgs-Strickland, in her recent review of the methodological approaches that are used to inform our understanding of late mediaeval exoticism, defined the exotic as 'a *quality* rather than as a limited set of real or imaginary 'outside' groups'.[45] The idea finds an echo in some of the terminology used in the early modern era to describe animals that distinguished themselves by virtue of their peculiar characteristics or idiosyncratic appearances. Vasari again furnished suitable expressions, this time in reference to animals depicted by Piero di Cosimo (1461-1521), (Fig. 8a-c), which Vasari described as 'stravagante, biz[z]arro e fantastico'. [46] Perhaps the most 'odd, bizarre and fantastical' amongst them was Piero's depiction of a giraffe, which featured in his *Vulcan and Aeolus* (ca.1495-1500) (Fig. 9). The depicted animal was a likely reminder of the beast that was sent to Florence by the Sultan of Egypt, and the myriad of local histories that recorded the event used similar terminology to describe the African quadruped.[47] An example is Bartolomeo Masi's (1480-1531) *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi: calderaio fiorentino dal 1478 al 1526*, which offers the following account:

> [gli] animale vivi... [sono] de' più begli e de' più maravigliosi che mai si vedessimo in queste parte; fra'quali v'era uno animale che si chiamava giraffa, che aveva la testa sua come una vitella, sanza corna, e aveva el pelo rossigno, e aveva le ganbe dinanzi alte circa di tré braccia, e quelle di dietro circa a dua e aveva la coda sua come una vitella, el collo lungo circa di quattro braccia.[48]

Masi's device of comparing the giraffe's physical features to that of more familiar domestic species and his references to the proportional relationships between the animal's legs and neck provide a visual sense of a creature, few, if any of his readers were likely ever to have

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[45] Higgs-Strickland, Debra,'The Exotic in the Later Middle Ages: Recent Critical Approaches', *Literature Compass*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2008), 58-72 (p.60).
[46] Vasari, 1568, Vol. 4, p.66; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.362.
[47] The specific circumstances of the 1487 Egyptian trading mission and the precious animal gift will be considered at length in case study 1, Chapter 4.
[48] 'The live animals [are] of the most beautiful and marvellous that have ever been seen in these parts; among these there was an animal which is called giraffe, which has a head like a calf without horns, and reddish fur, and it has high front-legs of circa three *braccia*, and those at the rear are circa two and its tail is like that of a calf, the long neck is circa four *braccia*', Masi, Bartolomeo, *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi: calderaio fiorentino dal 1478 al 1526 / per la prima volta pubblicate da Gius. Odoardo Corazzini*, Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1906, ricordanza 68, p.18.

encounter. It also helps to draw attention to the quadruped's most distinctive bodily attribute: its disproportionately long neck. The expression *maraviglioso* (marvellous) thus reflected the fact that, to Masi, the unknown beast possessed qualities that were both ordinary and extraordinary. Baldinucci also used the expressions *maravigliosi* and *stravaganti* (odd, eccentric), especially in reference to the *uccelli forestieri* (foreign birds) that featured in the zoological works Bimbi produced for Cosimo III de' Medici.[49] An example is the already noted 'pappagallo ... dall'Indie', which, as Baldinucci explained, was 'maraviglioso per la sua stravaganza' ('marvellous on account of its oddity'), and whose features, including its 'cresta di lunghe penne' (long-feathered crest) he goes on to describe in detail.[50] The same passage also makes reference to a 'caracos' (a flamingo) (Fig. 10), which Baldinucci described as 'un grand'uccello indiano di rarissima qualità' and which he compares 'ad un struzzolo' (an ostrich).[51] The comparison implies that while the flamingo was deemed exotic, in our modern sense of the word, ostriches, which are frequently cited among the gifts received by the Medici, were evidently deemed sufficiently familiar for common recognition by the time Baldinucci wrote his manuscript (ca.1725-1730) to be cited as a contrasting example. Bizarrely, the white Arctic fox needed no introduction, since its shape was evidently familiar. As we shall see, birds appealed to the taste among European courts for the luxurious and the decorative, and exotic as well as the more extravagant domestic types were collected for a variety of reasons, including vivid colouration, special markings, delicate feather-structures, unusual shapes, or indeed for their ability to create sound-effects and in some cases their ability to mimic human speech.

Exceptional physical beauty or disturbing bodily deformity could also be qualities that defined something as extraordinary. For example, Pietro da Bibbiena, in his description of the animals that accompanied the Egyptian embassy to Florence, made a distinction between the 'bel cavallo bajo' (the beautiful bay horse') and the 'strani...montoni e pecore' (strange rams and ewes').[52] Anatomical anomalies and abnormalities were qualities that in

[49] Baldinucci, 1975, pp.243/244/245.
[50] Baldinucci, 1975, p.245.
[51] 'A large indian bird of rare quality', Baldinucci, 1975, p.245.
[52] From Pietro da Bibbiena's letter to Clarice de' Medici, quoted in Fabroni, Angelo (1732-1803), *Laurentii Medicis Magnifici vita / auctore Angelo Fabronio*, 2 Vols, Pisa: J. Gratiolius, 1784, Vol.2, doc. no. 199, p.337.

the early modern era caused contrasting reactions of pleasure and fear, wonder and repugnance, desire and distaste.[53] We get a sense of this duality when noting Vasari's description of the chameleon depicted by del Sarto in the fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* cited above, whose strangeness is described as a *disformità* (modern spelling: *deformità*, deformity). The term may have referred to the reptile's peculiar ability to adapt and change its colouration according to its immediate surroundings, and Paula Findlen makes the point that collectors were captivated by the chameleon's transformative powers, a virtue, which to them epitomized the physical indeterminacy of other creatures and the sometime paradoxical eccentricities of nature.[54] Its juxtaposition with the dwarf was thus not entirely accidental, because he too defied natural laws on account of his stunted growth, which meant that he was seen as neither boy nor man, and this made him as distinctive and unusual as the chameleon. Bimbi's paintings of double-headed and conjoined lambs and calves also prompted these divergent sensibilities. Bimbi himself, in the cartouche of his painting of the lambs described the deformed creature as *maraviglioso*, whereas Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti's (1712-1783), commenting on the same picture, identified the animal as *mostri* (monstrous).[55] The implications of these contrasting reactions will be explored in greater depth in the case study of Chapter 7, but it is worth noting that the very fact that these domestic farm animals were singled out for comment, painted and displayed alongside foreign species, imbued them with an equal status as the more extravagant exotic creatures from faraway countries.

What has emerged from this etymological enquiry is that the vocabulary used to describe the different species was as rich and varied as the creatures to which it was applied. Rare and previously unknown species from the New World challenged linguistics as much as they did natural philosophy, for they demanded a more subtle vocabulary and new ways of rationalizing them. Notions of what characterized an animal as noteworthy

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[53] On this see especially Chapter V ('Monsters: a Case Study') in Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150-1750*, New York: Zone Books, 2001.
[54] Findlen, Paula, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996, pp.299-301.
[55] 'Tra questi sono due *Mostri di Vitella*, ed uno di *Pecora*' ('Among these are two Monstrous Calves and a Sheep'), Targioni Tozzetti, Giovanni, *Relazioni d'alcuni viaggi fatte in diverse parti della Toscana, per osservare le produzioni naturali e gli antichi monumenti d'essa*, 6 Vols, Firenze: Stamperia Imperiale, 1751-54, Vol. 1 (1751), p.32.

and unusual shifted and evolved over time, and the language reflected the nuances of meanings and associations Europeans attributed to particular groups of species. We would no longer define a bay horse, an elk, a bison or a bear as exotic animals, nor would we celebrate or denounce deformed beings as marvellous or monstrous. The word exotic, as it is applied in this study, thus has to include animal categories which would no longer accord with the modern-day definition noted at the beginning of Part II. For the early modern period the expression ‘exotic’ comprised not just species from distant continents, but also wild and rarely seen European animals, as well as the more remarkable or bizarre forms of domestic beasts.

CHAPTER 1

Menageries in Medicean Florence

Introduction

> [I]n Florence, from the Middle Ages to the second half of the eighteenth century, the practice of keeping caged wild animals was so well established as to be considered one of the city's oldest traditions.[56]

This chapter will examine this statement with a special focus on the menageries and aviaries established and maintained by the Medici court, in an endeavour to discover not just where the Medici housed their animal collections, but also how the zoological spaces and their functions contributed to the self-imaging of the court. The opening section of the argument will briefly consider the historical context of animal collecting in Italy and 'the practice of keeping caged wild animals' in the Florentine context prior to the Medici's rule. The remainder of the argument will centre on the three principal buildings erected by the Medici Dukes and Grand Dukes to accommodate the birds and mammals in their possession: the *Serraglio de leoni* (zoo of lions) located nearby the church of San Marco, the famous aviary at Pratolino and the later-built *Serraglio degli animali rari* (zoo for rare species) in the Boboli gardens that formed part of the Pitti Palace complex. The investigation will address several key questions. Firstly, what was the significance of the differing locations - the one set in a public and urban space, the other two placed within the private settings of the princely gardens? Secondly, what did the buildings look like and what types of species did they accommodate? Lastly, how did the purposes and settings of these zoological spaces help to inform the paintings commissioned by the Medici rulers? As will become clear, conclusions reached in this chapter will also have important ramifications, not just for the understanding animal depiction generally, but also in relation to the specific priories individual Medici rulers attributed to rare and exotic species and to the way they used and visually commemorated them.

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[56] Simari, 1985, p.27.

Animal collections in Italy and in Florence prior to the *cinquecento*

Gustave Loisel's three-volume *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours* (1912) is the source to which most historians turn when discussing animal collections. Although the ambitious scope of the work cannot be denied, the author's bold claims are not always backed up with firm and reliable primary testimony. Thus, Loisel would have us believe that Lorenzo de' Medici (*il Magnifico*, 1449-92), aside from the famous giraffe, possessed hunting leopards, tigers, lions, bears, and elephants which, together with lions, accompanied him on a triumphal procession.[57] Scholars have attributed this list of animals to Lorenzo ever since, even though Loisel's statement is left entirely unsupported by any form of evidence.[58] The veracity of the idea that Lorenzo owned a giraffe will be challenged in Chapter Four; as for the elephants, such high-status animals, as we will see in the next chapter, were given to emperors, popes and kings but not to high-ranking citizens of a Republic. Tigers, in Lorenzo's time were a very rare presence in European animal collections, and the Duke of Ferrara, Ercole d'Este (reg.1471-1505), appears to have been exceptional in owning such a precious beast in the late fourteenth century.[59] It is questionable, therefore, whether Lorenzo personally owned animals of the types described by Loisel, not only because the author's claims remain unconfirmed, but also because the Medici's social and political position during the fifteenth century was not one typically associated with the power held by the individuals and institutions who did own collections of wild and exotic beasts prior to the *cinquecento.*

In Italy, as in all western culture, ancient Greece and Rome provided the models both for the collecting of wild and exotic beasts and for their use in processions and other forms of public entertainments.[60] Available classical texts, such as Pliny the Elder's (23-79CE) *Natural History*, Cassius Dio's (ca.150-235CE) *Roman History*, and Suetonius's

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[57] Loisel, Gustave, *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours*, 3 Vols. Paris, O. Doin & H. Laurens, 1912, Vol.1, pp.199-200.

[58] See ftn.3:Baratay, 2002, p.19; Marilena Mosco also claims that Lorenzo *il Magnifico* was given 'a cheetah, a leopard, a lion, a lioness, a dromedary and a giraffe... by the Sultan of Egypt in 1489', no reference is provided to confirm the source of this information, Mosco, 1985, p.17.

[59] Sardi, Gasparo, *Historie Ferraresi di Gasparo Sardi*, Ferrara: Appresso Francesco Rossi da Valenza, 1556, p. 329; that they were rare is suggested in Baratay, 2002, p.19.

[60] George Jennison makes the point that the zoological collections of the much older civilizations of India and China had little direct influence in the West, see Jennison, George, *Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005 (paperback edition), pp.xi-xii.

(ca.71-135 CE) *The Lives of the Caesars* described the animal collections that Roman emperors and wealthy aristocrats established in the parks of their palaces and villas. Suetonius, for example, noted that the Emperor Nero (54-68 CE) kept exotic beasts in the grounds of his Golden House.[61] Roman historians also recorded the elaborate public games and processions that involved the use of wild and exotic beasts. One notable occasion was the 'quadruple triumph' staged by Julius Caesar (ca.102-44 BCE) in 46 BCE to celebrate his victorious campaigns in the East, which, according to Dio, featured a 'camelopard' (giraffe), forty elephants and '400 lions', presumably these beasts were among the spoils Caesar brought back from Egypt.[62] Many such exotic creatures, African wild cats in particular, were sacrificed in the brutal and bloody *venationes*, or spectacles involving the ritual slaughter of wild animals, which Roman historians inform us, were staged with horrifying regularity at the Roman Circus or in the Forum.[63] As we shall see below, the zoological sites which the Medici established once they became a recognized court reflected both of these ancient traditions.

In Byzantium, as Willene Clark explains, court-sponsored animal shows and combats retained their popularity, but in the West, the end of Roman hegemony meant that such customs virtually disappeared until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when a revival of Classicism in Europe led to a renewed interest in the customs of keeping menageries and in the use of animals in public events.[64] The Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II (reg.1220–1250) was at the forefront of this revival, and the animal collection he established in the park nearby his palace at Foggia in southern Italy was the most impressive in medieval Europe. Frederick's famous treatise on the art of hawking (*De arte venandi cum avibus*, ca.1230-45) listed some of the animals in his possession: 'lions, leopards, cheetahs, elephants, dromedaries, camels, ostriches, ring-necked parakeets, a white cockatoo,

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[61] Jennison, 2005, p.70.
[62] Jennison, 2005, pp. 56/99-136; Dio, Cassius Cocceianus, *Dio's Roman History*, trans. by Earnest Cary, 9 Vols., Cambridge: Harvard University Press (The Loeb Classical Library), 1961 reprint, Vol. 4, p.253; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* [: A Selection], trans. by John F. Hale, London: Penguin Books, 2004 (reprint), p.117.
[63] Jennison, 2005, pp.56/42-136.
[64] Clark, Willene B., *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-family Bestiary: Commentary, Art, Text and Translation*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006, pp.17-18, see also Baratay, 2004, pp.18-9.

...peacocks and pheasants' as well as several hunting leopards.[65] The Emperor also revived the custom of using beasts as an outward expression of his temporal power, for his prized beasts frequently accompanied him on his triumphal progresses, such as his march to Germany in 1235, or his Triumphs in Cremona and Rome some two years later.[66] The Angevin and Aragonese Kings, who took over the reign of Sicily and Naples after the demise of the Hohenstaufen dynasty in 1266, are known to have continued the tradition of keeping menageries, and Sicily's proximity to the continent of Africa must have ensured that their collection was well stocked with beasts from that region. Supporting evidence may be obtained from an entry on 15 September 1316 in Giambattista Lorenzi's *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo ducale di Venezia*, which recorded the successful birth of three lion cubs from a pair of lions which Frederick III of Aragon (ca.1272/3-1337) had presented to the Republic of Venice. The beasts, according to Lorenzi, were kept in a purpose-built enclosure located under a portico in the courtyard of the Doge's palace, and two drawings, showing lions in their enclosures, created by the Venetian artist Jacopo Bellini (ca.1400-70/1), provide a keyhole view inside a contemporary lion house (Figs. 11-12).[67]

Giovanni Villani's (ca.1275-1348) *Cronica* (before 1348), reports that the first lion received by the Florentine Republic was in 1302. The gift was presented by Pope Boniface VIII.[68] However, Villani's *Cronica* suggests that lions were a presence in Florence in the previous century, and even a leopard is noted to have been kept in a separate enclosure beside the lion cages located in the Piazza San Giovanni.[69] Villani's *Cronica* mentions several specific occasions when lionesses successfully gave birth to cubs, with one instance

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[65] Clark, 2006, p.19, fns.106-7; Kantorowicz, Ernst, *Frederick The Second 1194-1250*, London: Constable & Co Ltd., 1957, p.311.
[66] Kantorowicz, 1957, pp.xxii/311.
[67] Lorenzi, Giambattista, *Monumenti per servire alla storia del Palazzo ducale di Venezia: ovvero Serie de atti pubblici dal 1253 al 1797 / che variamente lo riguardano tratti dai Veneti archivii e coordinati da Giambattista Lorenzi*, Venezia: Visentini, 1868, pp.10-11.
[68] Villani, Giovanni, *Cronica di Giovanni Villani*, 8 Vols, Florence: Magheri, 1823, Vol. 3, Cap.LXII
[69] Villani, 1823, Vol.2, pp.93/95; see also Davidsohn, Robert, *Storia di Firenze*, 8 Vols., Firenze: Sansoni, 1956-68, Vol.II (1956), p.598; Imbert, Gaetano, *La vita Fiorentina nel seicento: secondo memorie sincrone (1644-1670)*, Firenze: R. Bemporad & figlio, 1906, p.55; 'A tale bestie [leopardo] già dal 27 Aprile 1291 era decrata una casa particolare' ('to this beast [leopard] even from the 27 April 1291 was assigned a separate enclosure'), Gaye, Johann Wilhelm, *Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI / pubblicato ed illustrato con documenti pure inediti dal dott. Giovanni Gaye, con facsimile*, 3 Vols, Firenze: Presso G. Molini, 1839-40, Vol.1, p.422.

occurring at the end of June 1337 and another on 3 August 1355.[70] The regal beasts, in the form of the famous Florentine *Marzocco*, had come to be regarded as the emblematic embodiment of Republican virtue and liberty, and citizens interpreted the successful births of new cubs as a good omen for the city's peace and prosperity. [71] An increase in the number of large exotic cats may explain why, in 1350, the Florentine lion collection was moved to a more permanent enclosure and courtyard at the rear of the Palazzo dei Priori, a site which is still known as the Via dei Leoni (Fig. 13). [72] The animals were to remain there for two centuries, until 1550, when Duke Cosimo I de' Medici (1519-1574; Duke of Florence 1537-69, Grand Duke of Tuscany 1569-74) had the beasts transferred to the *Serraglio de leoni*.

The fact that the lions could be bred in captivity ensured that stocks were replenished and maintained, and Gregorio Dati's (1362-1436) *Istoria di Firenze* (ca.1410) recorded that by the beginning of the fifteenth century the Florentine lion house accommodated some twenty-four lions.[73] Likewise, Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), in one of his manuscripts dating from the 1500s, recorded that at the lion house 'in our city of Florence... there are always twenty-five or thirty of them [lions], which breed there'.[74]As we shall discover in the next chapter, the Florentine lion collection was to prove rather useful to the Medici rulers in the century that followed. Such testimony indicates that during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, the Papacy and wealthy republican city-states, as shown by the examples of Venice and Florence, where the *panthera leo* was such an important religious and civic symbol, may also be included among the earliest collectors of exotics in mainland Italy, though these collections were typically restricted to lions and in a few instances also to other types of large African wild cats.[75]

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[70] Villani, 1823, Vol.2, pp.93/95; in relation to the births of cubs, see Vol. V, p.235 and Vol. VI, p.140.
[71] For a history and bibliography of the *Marzocco* see Del Meglio, 2005, pp.31-69.
[72] Davidsohn, 1956-68, Vol. VII (1965), p. 513; Simari, 1985, p.27.
[73] 'Oggi ve n' è ventiquattro [lioni] ... maschi e femmine', Dati, Gregorio, *L'Istoria di Firenze di Gregorio Dati dal 1380 al 1405 : Illustrata e Pubblicata secondo il Codice inedito Stradiniano, Collazionato con altri Manoscritti e con la Stampa del 1735*, ed. by Luigi Pratesi, Firenze: Bernardo Seeber, 1904, p.116; for a more expansive account and bibliography of the Florentine lion collection prior to the sixteenth century, see Simari, 1985, pp. 27/29; Del Meglio, 2005, pp.70-76.
[74] Quoted in Charles Nicholl, *Leonardo da Vinci: The Flights of the Mind*, London: Penguin Books, 2007 (reprint), p.163.
[75] Clark, 2006, p.19.

As we have seen so far, the keeping of menageries was traditionally the preserve of emperors, kings, popes and wealthy Republican states. However, the custom gradually spread to the smaller Italian courts. Political struggles in the northern provinces, during the latter part of the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth centuries, caused numerous former self-governing city-states to fall under the control of despotic ruling families and this led to the formation of three of the most influential courts in Renaissance and early modern Italy. The Duchy of Milan was formed in 1395, when Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1351-1402) became ruler of the former republic. In 1450 the duchy passed to the Sforza dynasty. In neighbouring Mantua, Gonzaga rule was established in 1328 by Luigi Gonzaga (ca.1268-1360), who, following his military takeover, assumed the captaincy of Mantua. The family's position was consolidated a century later (in 1433), when his descendant Gian Francesco Gonzaga (1395-1444) succeeded in buying the title of Marquis from the Holy Roman Emperor. The d'Este family in Ferrara acquired that same title in 1393, and in 1471 Borso d'Este (1413-1471) was made Duke of Ferrara.[76] These newly established princely dynasties quickly began to model themselves on the cultural traditions and lifestyles of the royal courts in Europe and, as Francesco Maturanzio (1443-1518) in his *Chronicles of the City of Perugia 1492-1503* recommended, 'outlandish animals' were to be included among the 'sumptuosities...befitting the state of a noble lord'.[77] The practice of keeping wild and exotic beasts thus became more widespread, and it appears that by the mid-to-late fifteenth century each of these newly-formed dynasties had established enclosed hunting parks, from which ordinary people were excluded, and maintained collections of animals suitable for the hunt.[78] The zoological collection of the Visconti dukes, for example, is said to have included 'cheetahs, leopards, lions, ostriches, bears, and other unusual animals, which they

[76] Waley, Daniel, *The Italian City-Republics*, London & New York: Longman, 1998 (ninth impression), pp.200-203; Fletcher, Stella, *The Longman Companion to Renaissance Europe 1390-1530*, Harlow: Longman, 2000, pp.73-79.
[77] Maturanzio, Francesco, *Chronicles of the city of Perugia 1492-1503: written by Francesco Matarazzo*; tr. by Edward Strachan Morgan, London: J.M. Dent; New York: E.P. Dutton, 1905, p.221.
[78] The Visconti had established a large hunting park at Pavia, but they also maintained parks at Milan and Cusago. The Gonzaga's hunting park was especially large and stretched between Marmirolo and the *castello* of Goito. The d'Este rulers established several so-called *delizie* (hunting lodges) and a large hunting park known as the *Barco* surronded their *Belfiore* country estate, near Ferrara, see Syson, Luke and Dillian Gordon, *Pisanello: Painter to the Renaissance Court*, London: National Gallery Company, 2001, p.80; Loisel, 1912, Vol.1, pp.201-2; Tuohy, Thomas, *Herculean Ferrara: Ercole d'Este, 1471-1505 and the Invention of a Ducal Capital*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.342-43.

accommodated in their park at Pavia.[79] The Sforza successors evidently continued to collect these types of animals, as is evident from the correspondence of the Milanese ambassador in Venice, who was charged on several occasions between 1494-6 'to procure for his prince [Ludovico il Moro Sforza,1452-1508] leopards and... civets'. Venice, was one of the main markets in northern Europe for the procurement of African beasts, and as we will learn in the next chapter the Medici rulers likewise purchased animals through middlemen stationed in that city.[80] The Gonzaga rulers established a large hunting park at Marmirolo, which featured an area especially reserved for larger and more prized animals. Smaller fauna were evidently housed closer to home, for when Duke Ludovico Gonzaga (1412-78) asked Andrea Mantegna (ca.1430/1-1506) to produce a drawing of an African guinea fowl, his letter recommended that the painter use as his model one of the 'birds in the Garden in Mantua'.[81] The d'Este court, likewise kept a collection of exotic beasts, such as peacocks, ostriches and other wild animals at their famous hunting park known as the *Barco*. The wall-enclosed space, which Ercole d'Este (1435-1505) had constructed in 1471, was used as a stage for the 'chase de pardi' that provided such a distinctive feature of hunting in Ferrara.[82]

The keeping of menageries and the use of wild and exotic animals in rituals of court were clearly seen by these rulers as essential expressions of their princely status and magnificence, and, as we shall see in a later chapter, these practices played a crucial role in

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[79] 'I Visconti nel parco di Pavia tenevano un serragliò di leopardi, leoni, orsi, [e] struzzi', Pochat Götz, *Der Exotismus während des Mittelalters und der Renaissance: Voraussetzungen, Entwicklung und Wandel eines bildnerischen Vokabulars*, Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1970, p.99; see also Magenta, Carlo, *I Visconti e gli Sforza nel castello di Pavia: e loro attinenze con la certosa e la storia cittadina*, 2 Vols, Milano: U. Hoepli, 1883, Vol. 1, p.117ff.

[80] 'Per provvedere al suo principe leopardi e...zibettoto', Malaguzzi Valeri, Francesco, *La Corte di Lodovico il Moro: La Vita Privata e l'Arte a Milano nella Seconda Metà del Quattrocento*, Vol. I, Milano:U.Hoepli, 1913, pp.729/724.

[81] Syson, 2001, pp. 80-1; for the letter see Woods-Marsden, Joanna,'"Draw the Irrational Animal as often as you can from Life": Cennino Cennini, Giovannino de'Grassi, and Antonio Pisanello', *Studi di Storia dell'Arte*, Vol.3 (1992), 67-78 (p.71,fn.11).

[82] Tuohy, 1996, pp.343/349, fn.13. I am assuming that the word 'pardi' denoted cheetahs, for as Warren Tresidder points out, 'Of all the great cats, only cheetahs can be trained for the hunt'. The author explains that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the term '*pardo*', was often applied indiscriminately and that it could be used to describe any of the large exotic cats. The words '*ghepardo* and *gattopardo*, which in modem Italian are used to describe cheetahs, came into common usage only later; the latter not until the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the former only in the nineteenth century. Tresidder, Warren, 'The Cheetahs in Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne"', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 123, No.941 (1981), 481- 485 (p.485, fns.25-6).

the gradual development towards a more naturalistic depiction of zoological subjects in the arts commissioned by the secular courts in northern Italy. That the early members of the Medici dynasty wanted to present themselves in a similar light to their courtly associates is perhaps not surprising, and this theme will be taken up again in the first case study. However, it was not until the officially sanctioned phase of their reign that the Medici rulers were able to maintain a court menagerie.

The Ducal and Grand-ducal *serragli* in Florence

The *Serraglio de Leoni*

In 1540, three years after he became Duke of Florence, Cosimo I de' Medici made the symbolic move of transferring his headquarter from the Medici Palace in the Via Larga to the Palazzo della Signoria. Ten years later he ordered the transfer of the Florentine lions from their cages at rear of the Palazzo della Signoria (now the Via dei Leoni) to the newly-built *Serraglio de leoni* near the Convent of San Marco. Giorgio Vasari was placed in charge of transforming the seat of the former Republican government into a Ducal Palace, and his extensions to the rear of the renamed Palazzo Vecchio are cited by Gateano Imbert as the reason for the relocation of the lions.[83] However, the transfer was surely also politically motivated, because both the confiscation of the renamed Palazzo Vecchio and the removal of the lions from a site they had occupied for two centuries, must have been seen by the Florentine people as severing forever the ties of association between an architectural landmark that had signified the former Republic's political independence and the noble beasts that had come to be regarded as the living and symbolic guardians of that ideal.

The location Cosimo I chose for the construction of the Ducal *Serraglio de leoni* was also politically significant, because during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the area between the churches of San Marco and Santissima Annunziata (Fig.14) had been the focus of an intense power struggle between members of the earlier branch of the Medici

[83] 'Nel 1550 fu trasferito [the *serraglio*] sulla Piazza di San Marco, avendo Cosimo I ordinato al Vasari di ampliare il Palazzo [Vecchio] dal lato posteriore', Imbert, Gaetano, *La vita Fiorentina nel seicento: secondo memorie sincrone (1644-1670) / Gaetano Imbert*, Firenze: R. Bemporad & figlio, 1906, p.55; Simari, 1985, p.27.

family and their political rivals. [84] It is important to consider this briefly, both in order to determine the significance of the site to the Medici family, and also because the context offers an opportunity to sketch in some essential details about the political history of the earlier branch of the Medici family, and also to allude to political tensions that existed between rival Florentine families, the Medici and the Strozzi family in particular, as this will be relevant in later chapters of this study.

Before the *Serraglio de leoni* was built, the site was occupied by Florence's first public university. Known as the *Sapienza*, its construction was financed with a generous bequest from the wealthy Florentine citizen Niccolò da Uzzano (1359-1431).[85] The fact that the *Sapienza* was depicted in numerous contemporary maps alongside other key Florentine buildings (Fig. 15) bears witness to the great civic pride Florentines evidently attached to the university. Emanuela Ferretti's research of the former *Sapienza* complex makes clear that Medici intervention on the site began long before Duke Cosimo I de' Medici's reconstruction of the site.[86] His distant ancestor and namesake, Cosimo de' Medici (*il Vecchio*, 1389-1464), seems to have resented the fact that the *Sapienza* was to be built in an area that he had come to regard as his own territory. All the more so, because the project was championed by Palla di Nofri Strozzi (1372-1462), who was an influential member of the party that was responsible for Cosimo *il Vecchio*'s enforced exile in September 1433.[87] It appears that before his expulsion, Cosimo's involvement in the *Sapienza* seems to have been negligible. However, Cosimo probably saw the project as a chance to get back at his former enemies, because from the moment of his recall to the city, in October 1434, the

[84] The *Serraglio de leoni* was also called the *Serraglio delle fiere or degli animali feroci* on account of the fact that besides lions and other large wild cats the building also housed wild animals, such as wolves and bears etc.

[85] On Niccolò da Uzzano's bequest, see Bocchi, Francesco, *Le bellezze della città di Firenze: dove a pieno di pittvra, di scvltvra, di sacri templi, di palazzi, i più notabili artifizj, e più preziosi si contengono / Ora da M. Giovanni Cinelli ampliate ed accresciute,* Firenze: G. Gugliantini, 1677, p.18; Del Migliore, Ferdinando Leopoldo, *Firenze città nobilissima illustrata da Ferdinando Leopoldo del Migliore,* Firenze: Stamperia della Stella, C.L. de' Superiori, 1684, p.247; Ferretti, Emanuela, 'La Sapienza di Niccolò da Uzzano: l'istituzione e le sue tracce architettoniche', *Annali di Storia di Firenze*, IV (2009), 89-149 (p.94) http://www.dssg.unifi.it/SDF/annali/annali2009.htm [22/07/2011].

[86] Ferretti, 2009, 89-149, see also Belluzzi, Amedeo and Emanuela Ferretti (eds), *La Sapienza a Firenze: L' Università e l'Istituto Geografico Militare a San Marco*, Firenze: IGM, 2009.

[87] Palla Strozzi was one of four *provveditori* (official overseer) appointed by the Arte di Calimala, who were in overall charge of the *Sapienza* project, Ferretti, 2009 (p.95). On Cosimo *il Vecchio*'s exile see Hollingsworth, Mary, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy: From 1400 to the Early Sixteenth Century*, London: John Murray, 1994, p.39.

body of *provveditori* that supervised the building of the *Sapienza* complex was dominated by members of his family and their close associates.[88] The Medici's domination of the site continued until their eighteen-year expulsion from the city between 1494 and 1512.[89] The family's intervention on the area occupied by the university resumed again following the election in March 1513 of Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici (1475-1521), the eldest son of Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, to the Papacy. As Leo X, the newly-created Pope lost no time in exerting the power and influence conferred onto him by his pontifical office on his native city. He made his cousin, Giulio de' Medici (1478-1534; Pope Clement VII from1523), a Cardinal and appointed him to the office of archbishop of Florence, whereas his nephew, Lorenzo de' Medici (1492-1519; Duke of Urbino from 1516), was placed in control of the affairs of state.[90] In 1515, the year of Lorenzo's appointment as Captain General of the Florentine armed forces, he ordered the construction of the *Stalle medicee* to the north of the *Sapienza* complex, and in 1522, five years after the completion of the Medicean stables, the Arte di Calimala formally handed over sole responsibility of the complex to Cardinal Giulio de' Medici.[91]

From this brief summary of the controversy that surrounded the conception of the *Sapienza* and the site it occupied, it is clear why Duke Cosimo I should have chosen the urban location between the convent of San Marco and Santissima Annunziata as the symbolic focus of his authority and, in the execution of the site's redevelopment, obliterate almost all traces of a civic undertaking that had been the pride of the Commune and a bone of contention to his distant ancestor and namesake. Cosimo I's first undertaking was the creation, in 1545, of a botanical garden, known as the Giardino dei Semplici, and, judging from an eighteenth century site plan, it took up almost half of the land that had been reserved for the former university (Fig. 16).[92] The botanical garden is in fact the only element identified on the ground-plan that still exists today, whereas both the *Serraglio de*

[88] Both Cosimo's son, Piero *il Gottoso* (1416-1469), and his grandson, Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449-1492), held the post of *provveditore*, Ferretti, 2009 (see especially pp.95/101/126-7, fn.63).
[89] Ferretti, 2009 (pp.113-4).
[90] Hale, John R. *Florence and the Medici*, London: Phoenix Press, 2001 (2004 reprint), pp.95-99.
[91] Ferretti, 2009 (p.116); on the Medicean stables see Belluzzi, Amadeo, 'Il serraglio dei leoni e la cavallerizza', in *La Sapienza a Firenze: l' Università e l'Istituto Geografico Militare a San Marco*, ed. by Amedeo Belluzzi and Emanuela Ferretti, Firenze: IGM, 2009, pp.99-116.
[92] Ferretti, 2009 (p.104).

leoni, which was added five years later, on the southern end of the compound, opposite the *Spedale di San Matteo*, and the *Scuderie* (stables) were destroyed or altered, first under the Grand Dukedom of Peter Leopold of Lorraine (reigned 1765-91), and in 1913, when, in an ironic twist of fate, the site was transformed into the *Università degli Studi di Firenze* (Fig. 17).[93] Any attempt to reconstruct a sense of the *Serraglio de leoni*'s physical appearance and architectural layout, its function and the types of animals it accommodated will therefore have to rely on surviving visual material and primary written sources.

Roberto Manescalchi suggests that the site where the *Serraglio de leoni* was built was an open field without buildings.[94] Ferretti's research and contemporary visual evidence does not support this view.[95] For example, the so-called *Pianta della Catena*, a painted birds-eye view map of Florence, dating from ca. 1490, shows the area between San Marco and Santissima Annunziata as a walled complex with numerous houses (Fig. 18). This is confirmed in Monte di Giovanni's miniature illumination of the *Annunciation* in a Florentine missal dating from 1509-10, which also depicts the area opposite the church and piazza of San Marco as a walled compound with several buildings (Fig. 19). Clearly Cosimo I greatly altered the site in introducing the *Serraglio* and this provides strong evidence of the way in which the Medici rulers began to dominate and transform the city's urban fabric. We do not know what the *Serraglio* looked like after Cosimo I's intervention and whether he adapted and altered existing buildings or commissioned an entirely new and purpose-designed structure. However, from Stefano Bonsignori's and Bonaventura Billocardi's engraved, axonometric plan of Florence (Fig. 20), created between 1575/6-1584, under the patronage of Cosimo I's successor, Francesco I de' Medici, it is possible to determine that towards the end of Francesco I's reign, the menagerie already closely resembled the structure depicted in the two eighteenth-century prints that exist of the *Serraglio de leoni* (Figs. 21a/22). Francesco I further commissioned the construction of the nearby *Casino di San Marco*, designed by Bernardo Buontalenti (1531-1608) and built in 1574 (Fig. 21b). The *Casino* served as the Grand Duke's *fonderia* (glass foundry), chemical

[93] The site of the former *Serraglio* now houses the administrative offices of the University of Florence, whereas parts of the Grand-ducal stables have been transformed into the Istituto Geografico Militare, on this see Belluzzi, 2009, pp.99-116; Ferretti, 2009 (p.116).
[94] Del Meglio, 2005, p.107.
[95] See especially Ferretti, 2009 (pp.118-19/141, fn.208).

laboratory and storehouse for the Grand-ducal collection of natural history specimens and also housed a series of artists' studios. It was in this space where Jacopo Ligozzi later created his zoological and botanical studies. Francesco I de'Medici had thus managed to turn the area around San Marco into an important cultural centre in which the scientific, the artistic and the natural worlds were being brought into a closely interrelated and complementary relationship. These combined interests, as we shall discover in a later chapter, also informed Francesco I's patronage of science and art.

Ferdinando I de' Medici, who succeeded his brother in 1587, made further improvements both to the menagerie and to the stables - the new Grand-ducal *Cavallerizza* (built between 1586-95). The *Serraglio* was fitted with a suitable façade and it is possible that the elaborate entrance archway leading to the *Cavallerizza* was also built during Ferdinando I's reign (Fig. 21a). However, Ferdinando I's most important contribution to the *Serraglio* was the construction, in 1587, of an enclosed courtyard for the staging of *caccie* (animal combats) and a viewing gallery from which the animals and the spectacles could be observed.[96] In an eighteenth-century ground plan this space is identified as an *Amfiteatro* (Fig. 23); both the term and the intended function of the space recall the spectacular *venationes* that were staged by Roman emperors to entertain the people and to impress upon them the power of the ruler. The Medici's construction of a purpose-built arena for the performance of similar animal combats can be seen as an attempt to revive the ancient custom. Vincenzio Follini's and Modesto Rastrelli's *Firenze antica e moderna illustrata* (1789-1802), offers the most detailed description of the interior of the *Serraglio* (see Appendix 2 for transcript), and their account together with a set of eighteenth-century floor plans (Figs. 23-6) make clear that spectatorship was at the heart of the *Serraglio*'s layout and construction. This was a space that allowed the Medici rulers to show off their

[96] Simari, 1985, p.27; Belluzzi, 2009, pp.99-116; on the '*Corridore*' (courtyard) see Bocchi, 1677, p.18; on the *facciata* (façade) see Lapini, Agostino, *Diario Fiorentino di Agostino Lapini: dal 252 al 1596*, ora per la prima volta pubblicato / da Gius. Odoardo Corazzini. Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1900, p.108.

collection of wild and exotic beasts, not just to local people but also to invited guests.[97] The plan showing the *Amfiteatro*, located on the ground floor of the *Serraglio*, also shows a long corridor that ran parallel to the former *Via della Sapienza* (now *Via Cesare Battista*) (Figs. 21b/23). The space to the left of the corridor was occupied by seven long, rectangular courts (highlighted in grey) in which the animals could exercise.[98] Iron gates on the inside, and corresponding barred windows on the exterior wall of the corridor, allowed passers-by to observe the animals within the courts. John Evelyn, who visited the San Marco menagerie in October 1644, was particularly impressed with this design feature, for he remarked that the animals were kept 'loose in a deepe, Walld-Court, & therefore to be seene with much more delight than the Tower of London'.[99]

As indicated in the plan, the corridor also provided access to the *Amfiteatro*. The *caccie* that were staged there could be observed from a ground-floor viewing gallery and from a much grander colonnaded balcony situated on the first floor. This afforded a less restricted view of the animal fights then the barred windows in the viewing gallery, and, suggests that this privileged space was probably reserved for the Medici family and invited guests. One such guest was John Evelyn, who noted his 'greate pleasure to see what an incredible height one of the Lyons would leape, for which I caused to be hung downe a joynt of mutton'.[100] The sophisticated layout of the *serraglio* building was thus clearly adapted to its function as a space for the amusement of distinguished visitors to the city, as well as an arena for the spectacle of slaughter for the entertainment of more privileged

[97] It is not known who created these plans, or what their purpose was. A near-identical set of plans, also dating from the eighteenth century, exists at the Florentine State Archive, reproduced in Simari, 1985, p.25, Pls.23-24. It is possible that both of these sets are copies of plans designed by Giuseppe Ruggieri (?-1772), in 1742. These latter plans were produced as part of an extensive survey of buildings, villas and other possessions conducted under Grand Duke Francis I of Lorraine. Many of the maps, charts, plans etc. that were produced during this reconnaissance are kept in the Prague State Archive, this includes Ruggieri's plans of the *Serraglio de leoni*, some of these are reproduced in del Meglio, 2005, pp.80-116.

[98] Joseph-Jérôme Lefrançais de Lalande, who visited the Florentine menagerie during his tour of Italy between 1765 and 1766, observed that, 'separately of their cabins, each... [of the] animals has a very long court, at the end of which there is a gate', quoted in Loisel**,** 1912, Vol.2, p.10.

[99] Evelyn, John, John, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E. S. de Beer, 6 Vols; Vol. II, *Kalendarium, 1620-1649*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955, p.195.

[100] Evelyn, 1955, p.195.

spectators, who were no doubt reminded of their host's profound generosity in his willingness to sacrifice some of his most valuable possessions for their enjoyment.[101]

Two sixteenth-century images showing *caccie* taking place in interior settings provide some sense of what such a space might have looked like (Figs. 27-29). The images were created by the Flemish painter Jan van der Straet, better known as Giovanni Stradano (1523-1605), who between 1567 and 1577 worked on a commission he had received from Cosimo I, to design the cartoons for a set of tapestries of hunting scenes for the Medici villa at Poggio a Caiano near Florence. The success of these led Stradano to create a further 104 hunting scenes, though this time the enterprise was undertaken independently and in collaboration with the engravers Philip Galle, Jan Collaert and others, who, in 1578, adapted the designs to print.[102] Both of these indoor *caccia* scenes are from this later series. Although the images are likely to be imaginary settings, it is possible that the architect of the amphitheatre at the *Serraglio de leoni* could have taken inspiration from such pictures, especially since one of them features a viewing balcony similar to the one described in the written sources. Thus, from the combined evidence of the written descriptions, the surviving prints and ground plans, as well as Stradano's designs, one does get some sense of the paradoxical relationship between the magnificence of the space itself, and the cruel brutality of its function to entertain visitors in the ancient manner of the Roman *venationes*.

The construction of a privately owned *Serraglio* and arena for the staging of *caccie* must have been the height of courtly luxury; however, on special occasions the Medici also sponsored much larger animal hunts in the public forum. Combats between wild and domestic animals in the Florentine context had their origin in the Republican era, when such events were staged in large public spaces, such as the Piazza dell Signoria (Fig. 30) or the Piazza Santa Croce. In these settings, *caccie* were organized not just for a few select guests, but for the enjoyment of the whole community, and they typically marked important events in the Commune's political history or state visits by high profile dignitaries. Among

[101] Baratay, 2004, p.25.
[102] The two series of 44 and 61 drawings respectively were combined and engraved by Philippe Galle, Jan Collaert and others in a work entitled *Venationes, ferrarum, arium, piscium, pugnae*, Rutgers, K. M., 'Stradanus Johannes', *Grove Art Online*, Oxford University Press, http://www.groveart.com/, [19/03/2007].

the best recorded animal combats were those staged in October 1439, on the occasion of the Ecumenical Council, and on 29 April 1459, during the visit of Pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini, 1405-64; Pope from 1458) and Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1444-76). We shall revisit these events in the first case study. Here it is worth noting that the tradition of animal *caccie* was continued after the fall of the Republic in 1530, and the Dukedom of Cosimo I saw a marked increase of such events, especially during the 1540s, the first of which took place on 27 February 1541.[103] During the 1545 carnival, no fewer than three *caccie* were held in the Piazza Santa Croce, and records suggest that many animals were slaughtered.[104] The ritual sacrifice of rare beasts for the entertainment of the Florentine people was probably intended to help bolster Cosimo I's popularity at home, which suggests an interesting parallel with the topic discussed in the next chapter, where we will discover that the 1540s also marked the point in time when animal gifts - lions in particular - were used by Cosimo I to enhance his standing in the arena of international politics and diplomacy. Similar events were staged by Cosimo I's successors, often to mark special events in the life of the Medici family, such as weddings, which suggests that the signification of such spectacles had shifted from the commune to the court.[105]

Visitors to the *Serraglio de leoni* often described the animals they observed, and these accounts suggest that the animal inhabitants were matched to the function of the menagerie as a space that symbolized the ruler's power, domination and control. For example, Michel de Montaigne in his *Travel Journal* recorded that, on his visit to the Grand-ducal menagerie in November 1580, he saw

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[103] For the *caccie* of 1387, 1439, 1459 and 1514 see Ricciardi Lucia, *Col senno col tesoro e colla lancia: Riti e giochi cavallereschi nella Firenze del Magnifico Lorenzo*, Firenze: Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 1992, pp.117/148/151; see also Cardini, 2001, pp.33-4; Trexler, Richard, C., *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991 (reprint), p.263,fn.189; for the animal hunts taking place on 25 June 1514 and 27 Feb.1541, see Landucci, Luca, *A Florentine Diary from 1450-1516*, trans. by Alice de Rosen Jervis, London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1927, pp.274/299.

[104] Lazzaro, 1995, p.205.

[105] Animal combats formed part of the festivities in 1565, 1589 and 1634, to celebrate the respective nuptials of Francesco I, Ferdinando I and Ferdinando II (1610-1670; reg.1621-1670), Lazzaro, 1995, pp.204-205; Simari,1985, p.28; Berner, Samuel 'Florentine Society in the Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Studies in the Renaissance*, Vol.18 (1971), 203-46 (p.226).

> […] a sheep of a very strange shape; ...a camel, some lions, some bears, and an animal the size of a very big mastiff and the shape of a cat, all marked in black and white, which they call a tiger.[106]

Another account is that offered in the *Itinerary* of Fynes Moryson, who visited the city in 1594, and records seeing

> […] five Lyons, five Wolves, three Eagles, three Tygers (of black and grey colour, not unlike Cats, but much greater) one wilde Cat (like a Tyger) Beares, Leopards (spotted with white, black and red, and used sometimes for hunting), an Indian Mouse (with a head like our Mise, but a long hairie taile, so fierce and so big, that it would easily kill one of our Cats), and wilde Boares.[107]

The diary of John Evelyn too records 'several Wild- beasts, [such] as Wolves, Catts, Bares, Tygers, and Lions.'[108] These larger and fiercer types of mammals were exactly those sacrificed in hunting and staged combats, which Matthew Senior describes as 'heraldic uses' of animals that signified the ruler's authority and prestige.[109] This distinction perhaps explains why lions, the most common among the exotic beasts in European captivity during the early modern era, continued to be depicted in a stylized and heraldic manner (Fig. 31), and in contexts that reflected the masculine blood sports to which such beasts were typically subjected (Fig. 32).

The Aviary at the Villa Medici, Pratolino

The Medici's interventions on the local topography made an impact not just in Florence but also in the surrounding countryside. Towards the end of the sixteenth century the family owned some seventeen villas that were scattered across the Tuscan landscape to form a web of satellite bases from which the prince could survey his territory. One of these properties was the Villa Medici at Pratolino. It was Francesco I de' Medici who had the villa built. In September 1568 he purchased farms and land some six miles north of Florence, and in May of the following year he charged his court architect, Bernardo Buontalenti, to design the

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[106] Montaigne, Michel de, *The Complete Works: Essays, Travel Journal, Letters*, trans. by Donald, M. Frame, London: Everyman's Library, 2003, p.1133.
[107] Moryson**,** Fynes, *An Itinerary: Containing his Ten Yeeres Travell through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turky, France, England, Scotland & Ireland*, 4 Vols, Glasgow: MacLehose and Sons, 1907, Vol.I, p.325.
[108] Evelyn, 1955, Vol. II, p.195.
[109] Senior, Matthew, 'The Menagerie and the Labyrinth: Animals at Versailles, 1662-1792', in *Renaissance Beasts: Of Animals, and Other Wonderful Creatures*, ed. by Erica Fudge, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004, pp.208-32, (p.211).

house and the garden. [110] Completed in 1586, the villa and the enormous wall-enclosed, sloping garden, which provided the setting for the famous aviary described in numerous travel books, became another stop on the tourist itinerary. Giusto Utens' (died 1609) painted lunette of ca.1598-99 shows the southern half of the villa and garden, with the aviary clearly visible to denote its importance (Figs. 33a-b).[111] A more complete impression of the massive complex is offered by Bernardo Sgrilli's *Pianta dei due Barchi, Viali, Fontane, e Fabbriche della Real Villa di Pratolino* (Fig. 34a). The ground plan shows the villa and the circumference of the garden together with a key identifying its main attractions. The aviary (no.33 on the key), situated on the south-eastern corner of the villa, is again prominently displayed, along with other features, such grottos, fountains and fishponds, replenished with water transported at great expense and labour from faraway distances (Figs. 34a-c).[112] The German architect Heinrich Schickhardt, who visited Pratolino in 1600, left the following description of the *Vogelhaus* (birdhouse) together with a small sketch, which help us to imagine what the structure looked like (Fig. 36):

> Ein Vogelhaus ist in einem kleinen Dele, hat zu hinderst uff 10 schu lang ein Gewelb. Uber dis Dele ist wie ein Tachwerckh von eise Stangen uf 43 Schritt lang und 13 Schritt breit überpaut, die Feld alss mit gestrickten Giter vermacht. Darunter steht es alles vol Bom. Miten dardurch fleist in einer steinen Renen ein kleins Wesserle. Fleicht vol Vogel.[113]

Schickhardt's description accords with those written by Francesco de Vieri (1586), Sgrilli

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[110] Smith, Webster 'Pratolino, *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Vol. 20, No. 4 (1961), 155-168 (pp.155/165).

[111] Giusto Utens was commissioned by Ferdinando I de Medici to depict all seventeen villas in the form of lunette paintings, see Mignani, Daniela, *Le Ville Medicee di Giusto Utens***,** Firenze: Arnaud, 1980; Mignanai, Daniela & Massimo Listri, 'Villegiature Medicee', *FMR*, Vol. 1 (1981), 118-143.

[112] Butters, Suzanne, 'Pressed Labor and Pratolino: Social Imagery and Social Reality in a Medici Garden', in *Villas and gardens in Early Modern Italy and France*, ed. by Beneš, Mirka and Dianne Harris, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, (pp.61-87; 347-361), p.64; Sgrilli, Bernardo Sansone, *Descrizione della Regia Villa, fontane e fabbriche di Pratolino*, Florence, 1742, p. 53, http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/ECHOdocuViewfull?url=/mpiwg/online/permanent/echo/pratolino/sgrilli_desc_1742/pageimg&mode=imagepath&viewMode=images&tocMode=thumbs&pn=4 [15/08/2011].

[113] 'A bird house is in a small sunken pit, at the very back there is a 10 feet vaulted building. The sunken pit is covered with a roof made from iron rods of 43 feet in length and 13 feet wide, the whole area is covered with an iron mesh. The pit underneath is full of trees. Through the middle of this runs a little stream of water. [The cage is] Filled with birds.' Quoted in Hülsen, Christian, 'Ein deutscher Architekt in Florenz (1600)', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 2. Bd., Vols. 5/6 (1917), 152-193, pp.174-75, Abb.17.

(1744) and others.[114] All three accounts agree that the structure consisted of a sunken pit that was roofed with scaffolding made up from iron bars and covered with an iron mesh or wire netting to prevent the birds from flying off. Moryson, who visited the Villa Medici at Pratolino in 1594, confirms this, for he describes the aviary as

> [...] a large cage of birds, made of wier, and open to the aire, in which are birds of all kindes and [from] many Countries, not only singing to delight the eare, but most pleasant and diverse colours to the delight the eye.[115]

There is also a consensus that the birdhouse was filled with greenery (ivy and laurel and other plants), and that there was a fountain which served for the watering of the bids. However, there is disagreement between de Vieri and Sgrilli about the size of the structure. Luigi Zanghieri confirms that Sgrilli's estimation of '50 braccia lunghezza e 20 braccia di larghezza', which, in today's measurements works out to approximately 30 metres in length and 12 metres in width, corresponds with all the available plans of the complex.[116] As described by Schickhardt, at the back of the wire-covered area there was an enclosed and vaulted space of some 10 feet in length, which provided shelter for the avian inmates. A photograph of the aviary at Pratolino, taken after the restoration conducted in 1815 by the then owner of the villa, Prince Pavel Pavlovich Demidoff, still shows the deep pit and the small roofed structure (Fig. 37).[117] This enclosed space was evidently heated during the winter months, for Montaigne, who visited Pratolino in November 1580, observed that the building was serviced by 'a singular stove'.[118] The presence of the 'stove' indicates that the cage housed exotic birds that were used to warmer climes. Although a heated aviary must have seemed the height of luxury, it seems doubtful whether a single source of heat would have been adequate to keep alive delicate species, such as the Eastern Paradise whydah

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[114] De Vieri, Francesco, *Discorsi delle Meravigliose Opere di Pratolino, et d'Amore*, Firenze: Appresso Giorgio Marescotti, 1587, p.48, http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/ECHOdocuViewfull?url=%2Fmpiwg%2Fonline%2Fpermanent%2Fecho%2Fpratolino%2FRic c_Misc_206_4%2Fpageimg&viewMode=images&tocMode=thumbs&tocPN=1&query=&searchPN=1&queryType=&mode=imagepath&characterNormalization=reg&pn=1[15/08/2011]; Sgrilli, 1742, p.25.
[115] Moryson, 1907, Vol. I, p.330.
[116] Sgrilli, 1742, p. 25; Zangheri, 1979, Vol. I, p.153.
[117] Zangheri, Luigi, *Pratolino, il Giardino delle Meravigli*e, 2 Vols, Firenze: Gonnelli, 1979, Vol. I, p.154; Vol. II, p.215, Plate 215.
[118] Montaigne, 2003, p.1133.

(*Vidua paradisaea*) from East Africa, which Montaigne described as 'little birds like goldfinches, which have two long feathers in their tail like those of a capon'.[119]

A poem written by the Florentine academic and poet, Cesare Agolanti, entitled *Descrizione di Pratolino*, suggests that besides the birds described by Montaigne, Moryson and other visitors, Francesco I also kept other species of animals in garden at Pratolino. Agolanti's manuscript is undated, and it is not clear what occasion prompted the conception of the eloquent octaves that are used to describe the park.[120] What is striking, however, and perhaps unusual, are the manifold animals that appear in the poem (see Appendix 3 for transcript of relevant stanzas).[121] Indigenous as well as exotic fauna from 'I' Occaso e dal Levante' seemingly abounded in the earthly paradise Francesco I had created at Pratolino.[122] Thus among the more familiar species mentioned by Agolanti were the 'Cervi' (deer), 'lepre' (hare), 'cigni' (swans) and 'pernice' (partridges). From the Levant came 'garzelle' (gazelles) and 'lo struzzo' (the ostrich). The 'Polla di faraon', which Detlef Heikamp identified as a Helmeted guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*), also originates from Africa, and 'La fol[aga]', because of its poetic link with the 'struzzo', may refer to an African Crested Coot (*Fulica cristata*).[123] The 'pavon...bianco' (white peacock), which Agolanti distinguished from 'l'altro pavon men bello e vago', was a bird that originally came from India.[124] The distinction may reflect the relative commonness of 'the less distinctive' Blue peacocks (*Pavo cristatus*), since these had been bred in Europe since the time of Imperial Rome, whereas the rarer white peacocks, imported from Asia are the result

[119] Montaigne, 2003, p.1133; There is scholarly agreement that the birds described by Montaigne are Eastern Paradise whydah, e.g. see Heikamp, 1994, p.134; Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.50.
[120] Detlef Heikamp suggests the poem may have been written in celebration of Francesco I de' Medici's marriage to his second wife, Bianca Cappello, in 1579, Heikamp, 1994, p.131.
[121] This study has made use of the transcript in Heikamp,1994, pp.131-33/136-38; for the manuscript see Agolanti, Cesare, *La Descrizione di Pratolino del Ser.mo Gran Duca di Toscana Poeticamente Descritto da M. Cesare Agolanti Fiorentino*, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, MS, Magliabechiana, Classe VII, Codice 8.47.
[122] 'I' Occaso' presumably referred to Asia and the Levant historically referred to countries in the eastern Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Egypt.
[123] Heikamp, 1994, p.133.
[124] Edward Wright notes that the numerous references to white in the poem may be meant as an allusion to Bianca Cappello, which supports Heikamp's assumption that the poem celebrates Francesco I's marriage (see fn.119 above), Wright, Edward, D.R., 'Some Medici gardens of the Florentine Renaissance: an essay in post-aesthetic interpretation', in *The Italian Garden: Art, Design and Culture*, ed. by John Dixon Hunt, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.34-59 (p.56).

of selective crossbreeding with other white peafowl.[125] The 'Cristati augelli d'lndia' has been identified as a northern Helmeted Curassow (*Pauxi pauxi*), on account of its crest.[126] This species originates from Venezuela and Colombia, whereas the 'anitre' (duck) may be a Mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) from north-eastern China and Japan. The male of the species has a pair of raised sail-feathers on its back, which gives the impression that the bird has four wings, and this may tally with Moryson's description of 'a Ducke of India having foure wings', which he observed in one of Pratolino's many ponds.[127] As the next chapter will show, many of the species noted in these five stanzas corresponded with the types of animals the Medici received as gifts or procured via agents. More importantly, a significant number of them feature in the zoological illustrations Jacopo Ligozzi (1547-1627) executed for Francesco I, which will be discussed in Chapter 4. The fact that Francesco I had the rare fauna in his collection immortalized in Agolanti's poem as well as depicted by Ligozzi, points to the great importance the Grand Duke attached to them.

From the combined evidence of Agolanti, Montaigne and Moryson we can deduce that the wall-encircled park at Pratolino was home to smaller and rarer types of mammals and birds; animals that were easier to manage than the ones at the San Marco menagerie. Moreover, the sources make clear that in the private setting of Francesco I's magnificent garden, animals performed somewhat different roles to those the beasts were subjected to in the city zoo. On one level, Francesco I's gathering of fauna from various parts of the globe served to 'authenticate' the natural paradise he had created, and it allowed the prince symbolically to proclaim his dominion over the universe and to assert the Medici family's power and influence.[128] In terms of the 'authentic' encounter with nature, both Agolanti and Moryson suggest that the elements in the garden were designed to engage the senses of the human observers, which meant that the birds, 'Che cantando il loro canto', were as pleasing

[125] Heikamp, 1994, p.133.
[126] Heikamp, 1994, p.134.
[127] Heikamp, 1994, pp.134-5; Moryson, 1907, Vol. I, p.329.
[128] Shelton, Anthony A., 'Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and the Incorporation of the New World', in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. by J. Elsner and R. Cardinal, London: Reaktion Books, 1994, pp.177-203, (p.186).

to the ear as the soft 'mormorio d'acque'.[129] Moryson's reference to the birds' 'most pleasant and diverse colours to delight the eye', echo Agolanti's description of the plumage of swans, as tinted 'In chiara linfa Ie candide piume', and point to the fact that birds were clearly appreciated as much for their visual and ornate qualities as they were for the rich tapestry of sounds they produced. [130] The idea that animals, birds in particular, were there to enhance the aesthetic experience is further implied in Agolanti's juxtaposition of living creatures and 'bronzi e di marmi scorge ornati', which underlines that within the paradisiacal setting of the princely garden, living organisms designed by the divine Creator were seemingly at one with the 'bronzes and marbles ornately crafted' by humans.[131] The deliberate blurring of *natura* and *artificialia* was typical of the Renaissance aesthetic that regarded art as an embellishment of nature and the natural world as a form of art whose principles could be discovered and understood.[132] The wish to understand nature was at the heart of the encyclopaedic ethos that underpinned the early modern collecting project, and reminds us that, akin to the dead zoological exhibits in the *Wunderkammer*, the living curiosities in the princely collection were also there to be observed, studied and conceptualized. As will become clear, the dual appreciation for nature's wondrous curiosities, to provide aesthetic pleasure, on the one hand, and to satisfy intellectual curiosity, on the other, is also reflected in the tensions between scientific and decorative naturalism, as manifested in Francesco I's and Ferdinando I's use of Ligozzi's talents as naturalist painter.

The *Serraglio degli animali rari*

The second menagerie in Florence, intended, as its name suggests, for the keeping of rare animals, was built in the private setting of the Boboli Garden that formed part of the Pitti Palace complex. The Palazzo, in Raffaello Petrini's *Pianta della Catena* (Fig. 38) is clearly marked out as a major landmark on the Florentine topography. Although the relationship of

[129] 'Who are singing their song', 'murmuring of the waters', see stanzas 2 and 5 in Appendix 3. On the topic of the garden's appeal to the senses, see Butters, Suzanne, 'Natural Magic, artificial music and birds at Francesco I de' Medici's Pratolino', in *Sense and the Senses in Early Modern Art and Cultural Practice*, ed. by Alice E. Sanger and Siv Tove Kulbrandstad Walker, Farnham: Ashgate, 2012 (the book is being published after the completion of this study, I have not been unable to consult the article for the purposes of this thesis).
[130] 'In infinite shades of white feathers', see stanzas 2 and 5 in Appendix 3.
[131] See stanza 5 in Appendix 3.
[132] Senior, 2004, (p.212).

scale between the Palazzo and neighbouring buildings is probably exaggerated, its size emphasises the fact that the building, formerly belonging the wealthy Florentine merchant and banker, Luca Pitti (1395-1472), was the largest privately-owned palace in fifteenth-century Florence.[133] The Medici bought the property in 1549 and designated it to become the new family residence of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, his wife Eleonora de Toledo (1522-1562) and their children.[134] The Pitti Palace also features large in Giorgio Vasari's and Giovanni Stradanus's fresco of *The Siege of Florence* (1556-61) at the Palazzo Vecchio (Fig. 39). Its inclusion in a painting that celebrated the famous Spanish- Imperial victory over the Florentine Republic (1529-30) - a battle that resulted in the Medici's restoration to power - implies that Cosimo I, who commissioned the fresco, regarded the acquisition of a key Florentine property as another triumphal conquest. As suggested in the fresco, the land south-east of the Pitti Palace was largely undeveloped when it was acquired by Eleonora. In fact, this tallies with the contract of sales where the plot is described simply as the 'vegetable garden of the Pitti', consisting largely of fields, olive trees and vineyards.[135] In May 1550, work begun to develop the humble 'l'orto de' Pitti' into a princely garden; the project was begun under Cosimo I, but each successive Medici ruler made his own contribution to the space as it evolved.[136] Thus by the closing decades of the sixteenth century, as reflected in Stefano Bonsignori's birds-eye view map of Florence (1584) (Fig. 40) and Giusto Utens's painted lunette of *Palazzo Pitti and Belvedere* (1599) (Fig. 41), the Boboli Garden already featured many of its distinctive landmarks: the distinctive shape of the Amphitheatre, in its temporary form, was mapped out, also present were Bernardo Buontalenti's imposing *Forte di Belvedere* (1590-95) and the *Grotta Grande* (1583-93).[137]

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[133] The Palazzo Pitti was built between 1458-1469/70.

[134] A contract of sales dated 3 February 1549 confirms that the property was purchased by Duke Cosimo I's wife, Eleonora de Toledo (1522-1562), for the sum of 'pro pretio Florenorum Auri 9000', to be turned into the family's new residence, Gurrieri, 1972, pp.19/32,fn.1.

[135] Mosco, Marilena, *The Pitti Palace: the Palace and its Art*, London: Philip Wilson, 1997, p.13; Gurrieri, 1972, p.19.

[136] Gurrieri, 1972, p.20.

[137] The Amphitheatre was transformed into a masonry structure between 1630-1636, during the reigns of Cosimo II and Ferdinando II, Medri, Litta and Giorgio Galletti, 'Boboli Gardens', in *Pitti Palace: all the museums all the works (The Official Guide)*, ed. by Marco Chiarini, Livorno: sillabe s.r.l., 2001, pp.142-155 (pp.144-45); for a more expansive history of the earlier phases of construction at Boboli garden, see Gurrieri, 1972; *Boboli 90: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi per la Salvaguardia e la Valorizzazione del*

From the testimony of John Evelyn, who visited the Boboli in 1644, and noted that 'The Garden is full of all Variety, hills, dales, rocks, Groves, aviaries, Vivaries, fountaines …& what ever may render such a Paradise delight‹t›full', it is clear that animals were kept in the garden even before a purpose-built zoo for rare animals was built.[138] Among the most famous zoological inhabitants were three elks that were presented to Francesco I by a Florentine merchant resident in Norway, which are recorded to have lived at the Boboli from July 1587 until February of the following year.[139] Marco Masseti proposed that the great variety of animals depicted by Bernardino Poccetti (1542-1612) on the vaulted ceiling of the *Grotta Grande* (painted 1586-87) (Figs. 42-43), not only portrayed his patron Francesco I's passion for the collecting of fauna, but that some of the species may have been kept in cages and aviaries in the Boboli garden or were allowed to roam freely in specified areas of the wall-enclosed park.[140] Cosimo III de' Medici evidently shared his ancestor's deep fascination with animals and plants, and his contributions to the fabric of the Boboli reflected this; for his reign saw the construction of an aviary, a fishpond, a garden for rare plants and most important of all, the new menagerie.[141] Known as the *Serraglio degli animali rari*, it was built between 1677 and 1680, and was located on the western fringes of the garden, nearby today's Annalena entrance off the Via Romana, on the site where the *Limonaia* (Lemon House) now stands (Fig. 44).[142] Like the *Serraglio de leoni* at San Marco, the Boboli zoo no longer exists, and we have to rely on maps, ground plans, contemporary descriptions and other evidence to reconstruct a sense of the building.

Giuseppe Santini's *View of the Serraglio of Animals that are in Boboli in Florence* (Fig. 45) is thought to be the only surviving image of the Boboli menagerie, and it seems to depict the building at an early state of its construction.[143] Other visual evidence is provided by two maps dating from the first half of the eighteenth century, which show the Boboli

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Giardino, ed. by Cristina Acidini Luchinat and Elvira Garbero Zorzi, 2 Vols, Florence: Edifir, 1991; Medri, Litta, Maria (ed.), *Il Giardino di Boboli*, (Banca Toscana), Milano: Cinisello Balsamo / Silvana, 2003.

[138] Evelyn, 1955, Vol. II, p.187.

[139] The gift of four elks (one died on route) are noted in a letter (5 June 1587) by Francesco I to Lorenzo Cagniuoli, ASF, MdP, 270 126v.; see Masseti, 1991, pp.323-326; Mosco, 1985, p.21, fn.13.

[140] Masseti, 1991, pp.326-329.

[141] Gurrieri, 1972, p.30; Simari, 1985, p.28.

[142] Payment records for the 'costruzione del serraglio... di Boboli begin on 6 March and end on 29 February 1680, they are transcribed in Gurrieri, 1972, pp.79-82.

[143] Marco Chiarini has ascribed the drawing to the little-known Giuseppe Santini, Chiarini, 1991, pp. 67-68.

menagerie in plan form (Fig. 46a-c/47a-b). These suggest that the *Serraglio degli animali rari* was a fairly long and narrow complex and that it consisted of several enclosed and open spaces. Various written sources, such as Gaetano Cambiagi's *Descrizione dell' Imperiale Giardino di Boboli* (Florence, 1757), help us to interpret these plans (see Appendix 4 for a transcript).[144] Cambiagi notes that the *Serraglio* complex was surrounded by a wall, whose façade (on the wall facing the garden) featured eight evenly-spaced, barred windows through which the animals - both birds and quadrupeds - could be observed (Fig. 46b).[145] A survey of the building, conducted in 1763, identifies some of the species were kept in the menagerie and suggests that the various fauna were segregated according to type. Thus the survey lists 'large rooms for monkeys', enclosures for 'white pheasants' and other poultry, an aviary for birds of prey and ostriches; there were also pens for Angora rabbits and Spanish dogs, and a large paved court served for the exercising of big wild cats and larger mammals.[146] Payment records further mention the 'fabbricazione della colombaia per li Piccion grossi di Portogallo'.[147] Beyond this, however, there is little direct primary evidence about the architectural layout of the Boboli zoo or about its inhabitants, although it is probably safe to assume that some of the animals Cosimo III procured or received as gifts (see Chapter 2) and those that he had depicted by Bartolomeo Bimbi (see Chapter 5) were kept there. In relation to the series of animal paintings Cosimo III and Gian Gastone commissioned for the Villa Ambrogiana, it is significant to note that, as Cambiagi observes, many of the animals were already dead and stuffed: 'in uno di questi ['Spartimenti'] molti di essi animali già morti, quali feccati, e ripieni appariscono nell'istessa form, come se vivi fostero'.[148] As will be made clear, the taxidermied exhibits at the Boboli menagerie were to play a crucial role in the Ambrogiana collection of zoological pictures, especially those created by Pietro Neri Scacciati, who seems to have relied entirely on stuffed creatures.

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[144] Cambiagi, Gaetano, *Descrizione dell'Imperiale Giardino di Boboli fatta da Gaetano Cambiagi*, Firenze: Stamperia Imperiale, 1757, pp.61-5.
[145] Cambiagi, 1757, p.62.
[146] Simari, 1985, p.28; Capecchi, Gabriele, 'Le "conserve degli agrumi", la grande Limonaia e il Serraglio mediceo', in *Il Giardino di Boboli,* ed. by Litta M. Medri, Milano, Cinisello Balsamo / Silvana, 2003, pp.250-252, p.252.
[147] The 'fabrication of a coop to house large Portuguese pigeons', Gurrieri, 1972, p.79.
[148] 'In one of these compartments there are many animals that are already dead, which are made and stuffed to appear as if they were still alive', Cambiagi, 1757, p.62.

Aside from these references, Cambiagi's account is primarily concerned with a description of the decorative architectural and sculptural features of the building. Thus, the façade was evidently richly ornamented with *all'antica* motifs. The window surrounds were decorated with rough *spugne* and mosaics. Other ornamental features included an antique bas-relief and an inscribed plaque, and the tops of some of the walls were supplanted by antique marble urns and vases with inscriptions, whereas the spaces between the windows were filled with fine laurel plants and box-wood. The inside too was richly ornamented with marble sculptures, one of which Cambiagi informs us, represented as statue of *Morgante Nano* (now located on an outer wall in the Palazzo Pitti courtyard) by the Italian mannerist sculptor Valerio di Simone Cioli (1529-1599) (Fig. 49). Six other marble figures, carved in the antique manner, were each holding a musical instrument and smaller statues were placed above a fountain, and two further statues in stone were placed at the exit. The intended effect of the ensemble, according to Cambiagi, was to evoke the feeling of being in some ancient edifice.[149]

Cambiagi's description suggests the setting-up of a paradoxical juxtaposition between animalistic nature and human artifice, and one might imagine the visual effect to have been similar to the drawing of an imaginary *serraglio* that appears in Johannes de Marcanova's fifteenth-century manuscript *Collectio Antiquitatum* (Fig. 50). In the image the artist seems to have made a deliberate distinction between the unruly and disorderly disposition of the wild beasts and the dignified and controlled demeanour of the courtly onlookers – who are shown as belonging to the aestheticized order and decorum of the human-created world, as indicated by the classicizing grandeur of the architecture and decorative features. The contrast between these two 'worlds' reflected the prevailing attitude toward animals in early modern Europe, which held that beasts, being unreasoning creatures, were created principally for the practical benefit and pleasure of humankind. Such a view was expressed by Bishop Ezekiel Hopkins in 1692 when he wrote that 'We may put them [animals] to any kind of death that the necessity either of our food or physic will require', and in William Byrd's comments, made in 1728, that songbirds were created

[149] Cambiagi, 1757, pp.62-3; Gurrieri, 1972, p.63.

for the sole 'purpose to entertain and delight mankind'.[150] These polar views on animals' utilitarian uses on the one hand, aesthetic pleasure on the other, are also in evidence in the different forms of spectatorship that the Piazza San Marco menagerie and the one at the Boboli gardens engendered. As has been argued, the function of the *Serraglio de leoni* was to provide a space for the staging of *caccie* and for tourist entertainment and also to remind the local passer-by who was in charge of the city's political system. The *Serraglio degli animali rari*, in contrast, was designed to make the encounter of wild nature an aesthetic experience; the rare and precious fauna seemingly complementing and enriching the luxurious *all'antica* setting, which in turn enhanced the status of the precious birds and mammals. Similar tensions between culture and nature, as we shall discover, were also played out in the collection of depicted animals at the Villa Ambrogiana.

Conclusion

Each of the three zoological sites considered in this chapter had its distinct character and function. The *Serraglio de leoni* proclaimed the new regime's political power and control both through the setting and the appropriation of the beasts that had long been the symbolic guardians of Florentine liberty. The aviary at Pratolino and the *Serraglio degli animali rari* at the Boboli displayed the Medici family's authority in more subtle ways and made their impact by aesthetic means. Collectively, all three spaces pay tribute to the Medici's longstanding fascination with nature's rare and precious fauna and flora, which they took care to collect and display, and to cultivate and catalogue, as a way of expressing their courtly status and their connections with other powers and 'other' cultures. Evidence put forward in Chapter 5 indicates that the Grand-ducal animal collection already suffered decline and neglect during the brief reign of the last Medici Grand Duke, Gian Gastone, who appears to have had little interest in the collecting of zoological rarities. The Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty who replaced the Medici and took over the mantle of ruling the Tuscan state brought about the final demise of all three of the zoological spaces considered here. In 1771, only a few decades after the new regime came to power, the list of fierce and wild beasts at the San Marco zoo had dwindled to little more than a handful, consisting of

[150] Quoted in Thomas, Keith, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, London: Penguin Books, 1984, pp.21/19.

one lioness, two male tigers, two wolfs, two bears, one vulture, five foxes and one Italian mastiff (see Appendix 5). Grand Duke Peter Leopold of Lorraine issued a decree in the same year, prohibiting the acceptance of any further animals, and five years later the *Serraglio de leoni* was closed for good.[151] The Boboli menagerie suffered the same fate shortly thereafter. A map of the Boboli garden dating from ca. 1767 identifies the area occupied by the *Serraglio degli animali rari* as a 'Fabbrica della circa', which suggests that the site may already have been used for other purposes (Fig. 51). Indeed, the survey carried out at Boboli (noted above) confirms that by 1763 the menagerie was in a poor state of conservation. After 1772, animal intakes were curtailed and the most prized exotic beasts were transferred to the Tiergarten in Vienna and the stuffed animals were later transferred to the *Museo di Fisica e Storia Naturale* (*La Specola*) in Florence.[152] On 8 June 1779, when an order was issued for the final closure of the Boboli menagerie, its sole residents were an 'ostrich' and a 'swan'.[153] Six years later the *Serraglio* for rare beasts was replaced with Zanobi del Rosso's *Limonaia* (1785), to serve for the over-wintering of citrus trees (Figs. 52-54). The *Grande Voliera* at Pratolino too was dismantled and taken to the Boboli gardens in 1778.[154]

[151] Simari, 1985, p.28.
[152] Capecchi, 2003, p.252.
[153] Masseti, 1991, pp.335-6.
[154] Zanghieri, 1979, Vol.1, pp.153-4.

CHAPTER 2

The Medici's animal collections: processes of procurement and practices of exchange

Introduction

The last chapter examined the zoological spaces which the Medici established for the housing, ritual use and the display of the animals they collected. This chapter investigates the processes by which the Medici procured their rare and exotic species and their use of them in the diplomacy of gift exchange. A core group of some one hundred or so primary source documents from the Medici Archive in Florence that relate specifically to the topic of unusual and exotic animals has provided the basic research material for this chapter. My analysis of this evidence has allowed me to produce more accurate data than has hitherto been available regarding the types and approximate quantities of species that were collected and exchanged by the Medici court, and on the means by which they acquired them. The majority of the documents refer to animals used in gift exchange, and the Medici will be considered both as givers and as recipients of such princely offerings in order to examine more closely the importance of exotic beasts in the forging of international relations. The crucial fact that the Medici lacked any direct control over the maritime trading routes by which livestock and merchandise were being shipped back to Europe meant that they had to rely on gifts and the use of agents to procure rare and exotic livestock.[155] The Medici had a network of agents, ambassadors and other court officials positioned in strategic ports such as Lisbon, Seville, Venice and Amsterdam to obtain precious rarities for their Florentine patrons. The testimony of one man, Cesare Sardi, who was Cosimo III de' Medici's agent in Amsterdam, stands out in particular, because his regular dispatches, consisting of nearly three hundred letters, provide fascinating insights into the difficulties involved in the procurement and shipment of delicate exotic creatures.[156]

[155] Fiorani, 2005, p.74.
[156] ASF, MM, 92, Ins.IV.

Global exploration and its impact on Medici collecting

Portugal and Spain took the lead in European navigational exploration, which meant that from the closing decades of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth century, the two nations were able to dominate overseas commerce (Fig. 55), including the trade in animals. Both nations derived much of their material wealth from the import of exotic commodities, and the ports of Lisbon in Portugal and Seville in Spain became the key Mediterranean trading centres from which goods were distributed to other European markets. The Portuguese East Indian and the Spanish Atlantic trade also had a direct impact on other European economies, especially the Netherlands, which at that time were annexed to the Spanish-Habsburg Empire. Antwerp's strategic location within the Habsburg-dominated Netherlands meant that the city became the connecting link and centre for the sale and distribution of Asian and New World imports throughout northern Europe.[157] Key political events during the 1580s, including the 'Dutch Revolt (1568-1648) and the battle of the Spanish Armada (1588), allowed the Dutch and the English to disrupt and challenge Portuguese and Spanish imperial overseas hegemony (Fig. 56).[158] The consequence was the foundation of the Dutch United East India Company (VOC) in 1602 (Fig. 57), and the Dutch West India Company (GWIC) in 1621.[159] Both VOC and GWIC had their headquarters in Amsterdam, and this concentration of marketed goods imported from the East and the West Indies in one location meant that by the dawning of the seventeenth century Amsterdam had replaced Antwerp as the commercial capital of Europe.[160]

Lisbon, Seville, Antwerp (to lesser extent) and Amsterdam were key locations from which the Medici sourced their exotic fauna and flora. That the Medici had up-to-date knowledge regarding the type of wares that were being sold on the global markets can be

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[157] On the strategic importance of Antwerp, see Boxer, Charles, R., *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800*, London: Hutchinson 1965, pp.2-3.
[158] On the Dutch situation see Boxer, Charles, R., *The Dutch Seaborne Empire 1600-1800*, London: Hutchinson 1965, Chapters 1-3;on the Spanish Armada, which culminated in the sacking of Cádiz in 1596 by an Anglo-Dutch fleet, see Colin, Martin and Parker, Geoffrey, *The Spanish Armada*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1988.
[159] I am omitting English maritime and colonial exploits in this account, as England was less relevant in terms of the Medici's procurement of exotica.
[160] On the VOC and the GWIC, see Boxer, 1965, pp.22-25; and Gaastra, Femme S., *The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline*, Zutphen, Netherlands: Walburg Pers, 2003.

gauged from the thirty-nine maps of non-European regions and fourteen covering parts of Europe, which Cosimo I de' Medici commissioned to be painted on the exteriors of the cupboards that lined the walls of the Guardaroba Nuova, at the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (executed 1563-84).[161] Each detailed map featured a legend providing information not only about the history and the peoples of the geographical region represented, but also a list of the commodities that could be acquired from the area represented. Thus, the map entitled *Indostan fuori il Gange* (Hindustan outside the Ganges), for example, stated that the region was renown for its amazingly long 'snakes ..., ferocious lions..., oxen as large as elephants...[and] rhinoceros..., [whereas] the Cape of Good Hope was well known for monkeys, peacocks and ivory'.[162] Although, as we have already seen, the provenance of 'other-world' animals was often not known or the information was inaccurate (peacocks, for example originate from India), the maps in the *Guardaroba Nuova* were based on up-to-date cartographical scholarship, which, according to Mario Scalini, indicates that Cosimo I and his successors had all the latest knowledge about the newly discovered lands and 'the different peoples of the world at... [their] fingertips'.[163]

Statistical evaluation of the primary evidence used for this chapter

The online database of *The Medici Archive Project* has enabled me to identify a set of core primary documents from the Archivio di Stato in Florence for investigating the procurement and the exchange of rare animals at the Medici court. [164] The database lists some 574 archival documents related to the topic of 'animals exotic and unusual' and, as one might expect, a large proportion of these referred to horses, hunting dogs and birds of prey, since these were by far the most common animal gifts received and exchanged by the Florentine court. The documents that make reference to these animal categories are so numerous that they speak for themselves in terms of the prevalence of these species, and I have therefore decided to leave them out of the present analysis. Also excluded from this investigation are documents that relate to animal products (such as leopard skins). This has yielded close to one hundred records that are relevant in terms of forming some broader

[161] Fiorani, 2005, p.73.
[162] Fiorani, 2005, p.70.
[163] On 'The Florentine Maps and Their Cartographic Sources' see Fiorani, 2005, pp.105-108; Scalini, 2001, (p.143).
[164] MAP:http://documents.medici.org/simple_search.cfm [accessed regularly June 2008- September 2011].

assumptions about the procurement, exchange, and presence of rare and exotic species at the Florentine court over two centuries (see Appendix 6 for a summary of relevant documents). Each database record offers a brief synopsis and a transcribed extract of the individual archival sources, and although in principle the information provided on the database is sufficient for my purposes, I have personally consulted a large proportion of these archival documents in the Florentine state archive, to confirm the information recorded on the database.

My statistical analysis also draws on material that is not listed on *The Medici Archive Project* online resource; this includes information concerning exotic beasts Cosimo I sent to the Duke of Bavaria and the four documents cited in relation to animal gifts that were sent to Cosimo III de' Medici, as well as the data obtained from the letters of Cesare Sardi (see below).[165] Collectively, the body of evidence has provided me with a broad-based set of documents for analysis, which, in chronological terms, covers almost the entire period of the Medici's Ducal and Grand-ducal rule.[166] I have grouped these core resources into the following six broad categories: animal gifts received by the Medici court; animal gifts made by the Medici to other courts and individuals; procurement of animals via Medici agents; requests for animals made to or by the Medici; and one category entitled 'other', which refers to documents that discuss issues such as the care or relocation of animals, and animals used in festivals etc., but which provide evidence regarding animal presence. My Statistical Chart 1offers a breakdown of the number of documents that relate to each of these categories. This confirms that gifts provided the Medici's main channel for the procurement of animals, followed by acquisition via agents (see Appendix 7, Statistical Chart 1). A further statistical analysis was necessary to place species referred to in the documents into broad classificatory groups. Although the quantitative data is relatively broadly sketched in, it provides a fairly reliable picture of the types of animals that were

[165] On the exotic beasts Cosimo I sent to the Duke of Bavaria, see Stockbauer, Jacob, *Die Kunstbestrebungen am Bayerischen Hofe unter Herzog Albert V und seinem Nachfolger Wilhelm V: Nach den im K. Reichsarchiv vorhandenen Correspondenzacten zusammengestellt von J. Stockbauer*, Wien: W. Braunmüller, 1874, p.76; for the animal gifts that were sent to Cosimo III see ASF, MdP, 1132, cc.209r., 298r., 427r., 435r.; Cesare Sardi letters, ASF, MM, 92, Ins.IV.

[166] This chapter focuses on the chronological span 1537-1723, as defined by the beginning of Cosimo I's reign and ending with that of Cosimo III de' Medici. The brief reign of Alessandro de' Medici (1531-1537) was less relevant in terms of the procurement and exchange of exotic animals. Likewise, I have not been able to trace any documents referring to rare beasts in relation to Gian Gastone.

most commonly represented in the Florentine menageries, and in what ratio (see Appendix 7, Statistical Chart 2). References to large exotic cats, such as lions, tigers and leopards, occur in almost half of the sources, while birds (this includes birds of prey from non-European locations) are the subject discussed in another thirty six documents. Small exotic mammals, such as African gazelles, civet cats, rare sheep, monkeys and apes are noted in thirty two of the documents. As we shall see, African beasts, especially big cats, which were less problematic to procure and easier to keep alive during transport, remained a constant among the animals collected by the Florentine court, whereas birds from the more faraway continents of Asia and America dominated the Medici's collecting practice in its later stages. A number of sources relate to unspecified animals, and the fact that these are often generically identified as animals from the Indies may be explained by the likelihood that the names of less familiar species, especially those originating from the New World, were simply not known at the time.[167] The remaining primary evidence concerns itself with wild European animals, such bears and wolves (such animals were often procured for the purposes of staged animal combats), while reptiles account for the smallest proportion (only one document is mentioned), which may indicate that living specimens were less commonly represented in European collections, even though in preserved form reptiles appear with frequent regularity in the inventories of contemporary cabinets of curiosities.[168] My statistics have taken account of the fact that a number of documents refer to more than one animal type. For example, a letter sent by a certain Jacopo Guidi to Pier Francesco Riccio requesting the transfer of a pair of lion cubs from Florence to Pisa together with instructions from Cosimo I, that the painter Francesco Bachiacca (1494-1557) was to depict a live bird sent to him in a cage, is recorded under the category of 'other' (Chart 1) and under wild cats and birds (Chart 2).[169]

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[167] See for example Augusto Tizio's letter written from Seville (20 July, 1584), which mentions 'animali de'Indie' ('animals from the Indies'), ASF, MdP, 1212, Ins.4, c.712r.
MAP: http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4273 [18/01/2011]

[168] On this see George, Wilma, 'Alive or Dead: Zoological Collections in the Seventeenth Century', in Oliver Impey and Arthur Macgregor (eds.), *The Origins of the Museum: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth- Century Europe*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, pp.179-192

[169] 'S. Ex.za [Cosimo I] ...stamani m'ha commesso che da parte sua le scriva, che ella le mandi qua ben conditionati et accompagnati, secondo che parrà a lei, quelli duoi lioncini. Et V. S. debbe sapere quali. Mando al Bachiacca un uccello vivo in una gabbia di ordine di S. Ex.za che lo [cancelled: di] ritragga', ASF, MdP, 1176, Ins. 11, c.19 r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid= 3212[18/01/2011].

Animals as diplomatic gifts

Part I: Animal gifts made by the Medici to other courts and individuals

When Cosimo I de' Medici assumed power in January 1537, he was given only a modest title and, lacking the support of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V (reg. 1519-1556), he was mistrusted and treated with hostility both at home and abroad.[170] Turning foe into ally and ingratiating himself with those in power, therefore, became a political necessity for the eighteen-year-old Duke. One way of achieving this, was through the diplomacy of gift exchange. The giving and receiving of gifts offered a means of establishing a relationship between the giver and the recipient based on bonds of mutual obligation, because the ritual signified both '*solidarity*', through the act of sharing, and '*superiority*', since the latter remained a dependant of the former until the gesture was reciprocated.[171] Suzanne Butters has argued that in sixteenth-century culture politics, 'the success of negotiations, alliances, affiliations, friendships and personal salvation depended a good deal on the effective deployment and reciprocation of gifts'. Participation in these ritualistic practices of exchange thus came to be regarded by early modern European rulers as a practical necessity both in order to establish and to maintain their power. [172] Cosimo I, as a shrewd policymaker, was undoubtedly aware that in order to demonstrate his credentials as a prince he needed to take the initiative in this ritual exchange of benefices. Moreover, the young Duke must also have realized that for the gift to be effective, it had to be appropriately matched to the recipient. One perfect 'object' in his 'armoury' was right on his doorstep: the lion-house. The regal symbolism of lions made them appropriate gifts for male rulers, and crucially, the fact that lions had been kept and bred in Florence for some considerable time (see Chapter 3), meant that Cosimo I was likely to have had a ready supply of such beasts to present to other courts and individuals or to respond to requests for suitable feline breeding animals. Lions, as fitting tributes to would-be friends and allies, thus played a vital role in Cosimo I's national and foreign policy.

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[170] Van Veen, Henk Th., *Cosimo I de'Medici and his Self-Representation in Florentine Art and Culture*, tansl. by Andrew P. McCormick, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p.1.
[171] Mauss, 2002, pp.50-5; Godelier, Maurice, *The Enigma of the Gift*, trans. by Nora Scott, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999, p.12.
[172] Butters, Suzanne, 'The Uses and Abuses of Gifts in the World of Ferdinando de' Medici (1549-1609)', *I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance*, Vol. 11 (2007), 243-354 (pp.245/302).

The evidence indicates that during the 1540s, when Cosimo I was still a minor player in the field of international politics, several lions were dispatched for this purpose. During this time the Duke also responded to several requests for lions from other courts and powerful individuals. The first such record dates from 1541, when Cosimo I sent 'duos catulos leonum marem ac feminam' to an unidentified foreign court.[173] Another favoured recipient was Otto Heinrich von der Pfalz (1502-1559), the Count Palatine of Pfalz-Neuburg, who, in March 1542, received 'due leoncini'.[174] Between March and May 1548, negotiations were underway for the transport of two lions as gifts to the French royal court of Henri II (reg.1547-1559) and Catherine de' Medici (1519-1589). An additional request had seemingly been made for newborn cubs, but as none had been born that year Cosimo I offered to send a pair of one-year old lions instead.[175] A year later (1549), Guidobaldo II della Rovere, Duke of Urbino (reg.1538-1574), was promised a sterile lioness (perhaps the one that failed to reproduce in 1548) evidently in compensation for a male lion he had originally asked for. The request was presumably made for the purposes of breeding, given the Florentine secretary's explanation that 'che de' lioni Sua Ec.a [Eccellenza] non ha se non uno che amonti et sia buono'. Cosimo I was clearly eager to demonstrate his generosity in other ways, which may explain why, besides the lioness, he also sent a bear.[176] The need for suitable breeding stock was also the reason for Alfonso Pimentel's (the Castellano of Milan) enquiry, in March 1560, whether Cosimo I could spare a young lion to mate with his lioness. The fact that Pimentel had to repeat his application some seven months later suggests that the availability of animals appropriate for reproduction could not always be guaranteed.[177] The conclusions we can draw from this is that lions were a sought after

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[173] 'Two young lions one male and one female', ASF, MdP, 4, c.83;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=12664 [19 /01/2011].
[174] 'Two lion cubs', ASF, MdP, 600, c.9v.
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=6738 [19 /01/2011].
[175] On the lions see ASF, MdP, 9, cc.478 and 561; on the cubs see ASF, MdP, 11, cc.48 and 154
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4845 [19 /01/2011];
MAP: http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=6942 [19 /01/2011];
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19754 [19 /01/2011].
[176] 'Of the lions His Excellency (Cosimo I) possesses, there is only one which mounts and is of any use', ASF, MdP, 4050, c.113; on the sterile lionesse and the bear, see ASF, MdP, 1169, Ins. 6, c.202; ASF, MdP 1175, Ins. 3, c.3; transcript from MAP: http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=2352 [23/02/2011]; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=2352 [19 /01/2011];
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=20978 [19/01/2011].
[177] ASF, MdP, 3108, cc.27 and 119; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=12282 and MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=17319 [18/01/2011].

'commodity' at European courts and that such animals were requested, exchanged and 'hired' on a fairly regular basis and for a variety of reasons. The evidence points to Cosimo I's eagerness to respond to such enquiries, though his ability to do so depended upon the availability and performance of his own stock during each mating season. What is significant, and perhaps somewhat ironic, is that the very gesture of bestowing lions on would-be friends and allies meant that the beast that had once been the emblem of Florentine Republican liberty was now emerging as a symbol of the power, magnificence and beneficence of the Florentine ruling family.

Cosimo I's successors continued the time-honoured tradition of presenting lions and other large wild cats to various courts and dignitaries. For example, in 1581, Francesco I de' Medici sent a female tiger to the Wilhelm V. von Wittelsbach, Duke of Bavaria (1548-1626), and because the animal died shortly after its arrival in Germany, the Grand Duke evidently felt obliged to offer a replacement specimen.[178] Four years later, a gift of two lions was made to Prince Vincenzo Gonzaga.[179] In May 1607, Francesco I's brother, Ferdinando I de' Medici, received a requests from the Holy Roman Emperor, Rudolf II (reg.1576-1612), for 'una tigra, et quattro leopardi'.[180] Eager to honour the request, the Grand Duke dispatched his animal handler (Burrino) with two tigers in July of that same year, together with a note to explain that his own two leopards were too unruly to be sent, but that more were on order from Alexandria.[181] Two months later Ferdinando I sent two more tigers and promised that two leopards would follow shortly.[182] This case illustrates the complexities of such negotiations as well as the length and expense to which the Florentine rulers went to grant such favours. Ferdinando I's own reward is likely to have

[178] ASF, MdP, 257, c.30r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=16090 [18/01/2011]; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=13978 [18/01/2011]; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=13969 [18 /01/2011].
[179] ASF, MdP, 2939, (no pagination, documents ordered by date: 17maggio 1585).
[180] 'One tigress and four leopards', ASF, MdP, 300, cc.39 r.-v. MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=1847 [18/01/2011].
[181] 'Mandiamo Burrino, uno de' nostri mulattieri, con due tigre per la M.tà dell'Imp.re [Rudolph II], et dovevano esser tre, ma non è stato possibile accommodarli tutti, per esser portati a uso di lettiga, et manderemo poi anche questo, quando ci saranno venuti di Alessandria i leopardi, per i quali habbiamo già dato l'ordine in quelle parte poiche due che ne havevamo non si sono potuti campare, per esser difficilissimi a governarsi [...]', ASF, MdP, 300, c.67r.; transcript from: MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=13811 [18/01/2011].
[182] ASF, MdP, 5052, c.545; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14860 [18/01/2011].

been the expectation that his generosity would not go unnoticed, for as Suzanne Butters has argued, the Medici princes counted on the fact that the nature and value of the gifts they bestowed on others would be monitored and reported by visiting courtiers from various European courts. [183] In terms of procurement, the examples noted above show that big cats were seemingly relatively easy to get hold of, and that in the ritual of gift exchange these ferocious beasts lost none of their appeal in helping to establish and maintain international relations between the Florentine court and other European rulers.

In contrast to exotic specimens of the *Felidae* family, the list of other types of animals and birds sent by the Medici to other courts is much smaller. References include instruction issued by Cosimo I to send to the 'Principessa di Molfetta [Isabella di Capua-Gonzaga] ... dell'anatre d'India et d'altri animali che le desidera per il suo barcho'.[184] In 1572 'Tre pappagalli piccoli [...,] Tre pappagalli grandi [..., uno] i° Pappagallo grande rosso, ... Una Topa d'India [...,] 24 passere di Canada [...,] Tre bertuccie [,] 2 Galline di Javaone [,] Uno Castrato grande' were dispatched to Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria (1528-1579).[185] In the same year, Francesco I sent a rather nasty-tempered lynx to Antonio Scaramuccia, the Maestro delle Poste of the Duke of Savoy, and Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria (ruler of Tyrol from 1564-1595) received 'un animaletto ...dell'Indie che chiamano lepre'.[186] In 1592, Ferdinando I promised to fulfil a request from his nice, Eleonora de' Medici-Gonzaga, Duchesse of Mantua, for white peacocks, though these striking birds from India were perhaps too precious to be spared, as a year later Eleonora had to remind her uncle of his earlier pledge to let her have 'di quei suoi Pavoni bianchi... et anco di quelle

[183] Butters, (2007), p.276.
[184] 'Indian ducks and other animals she desires for her park', 18 October 1549, ASF, MdP, 13, c.70; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=20978 [18/01/2011].
[185] 'Three small and three large parrots, one large red parrot, an Indian mouse, twenty-four canaries, three monkeys, two speckled hens from Java [or Japan?], One large ram [also from India]'. The list of animals is cited in Toorians, Lauran, 'The Earliest Inventory of Mexican Objects in Munich, 1572', *Journal of the History of Collections*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1994), 59–67 (p. 64). I would like to thank Dr. Annemarie Jordan Gschwend for bringing this article to my attention. See also Stockbauer, *Die Kunstbestrebungen am Bayerischen Hofe unter Herzog Albert V und seinem Nachfolger Wilhelm V, Nach den im K. Reichsarchiv vorhandenen Correspondenzacten zusammengestellt von J. Stockbauer*, Wien: W. Braunmüller, 1874, p. 76.
[186] For the reference to the lynx see ASF, MdP, 582, c.150; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22139 [18/01/2011]; letter dated 9 September 1581; 'An animal from the Indies which they call hare', ASF, MdP, Pezzo 257, c.30r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=13969 [18/01/2011].

sue Anitre d'India'.[187] What has emerged from this is that big cats, even towards the end of Ferdinando I's reign, were still at the top of the list of animals that the Medici court sent to other courts, but the evidence also indicates that the rarer species, such as African leopards and Asian tigers, which were felines used in exotic hunts, were perhaps becoming more popular in courtly gift exchange than lions. Birds emerge as the second strongest category in animal gift-exchange, whilst smaller exotic mammals appear less frequently in the records of animal gifts that the Medici bestowed upon other courts and individuals. This suggests, perhaps, that the larger and more ferocious beasts were deemed both more expendable, because they were more readily available than other species, but also more appropriate, since such honours tended to be bestowed largely upon powerful men. That the strategy of gift-giving, initiated by Cosimo I to improve his status and the prestige of his court, was successful is confirmed by the records noting the Medici as recipients of animal gifts, for their number far exceeds those recording them as benefactors.

Part II: Animal gifts received by the Medici court

The first and also the best recorded animal gifts received by a member of the Medici family, albeit sometime before they became recognized as a court, were the exotic beasts which the Portuguese King, Manuel I (reg.1495-1521), sent to Rome in 1514 to honour the recently elected, first Medici pontiff - Leo X. The animal tribute represented a veritable menagerie, and included a cheetah, two leopards, numerous parrots and Indian fowl, some rare dogs from India, a fine horse from Persia, and, the most significant among the animal gifts, a white Asian elephant.[188] A year later, in December 1515, Manuel I dispatched another prized Asian animal gift to the Vatican, a one-horned rhinoceros; though the ill-fated beast was drowned on route and reached its papal beneficiary only in stuffed and mounted form, in February 1516.[189] Manuel I had ascended the Portuguese throne a couple of years before Vasco da Gama set off on his epic voyage, and the generosity of the gifts he sent was undoubtedly meant both as a symbolic reminder of his overseas conquests and to secure Leo X's goodwill in allowing Portugal to maintain exclusive trading rights over the

[187] 'Some of his white Peacocks ...and also some of his Indian ducks', ASF, MdP, 282, c.187; ASF, MdP, 2942 (unpaginated); MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=16779; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4916 [18/01/2011].
[188] Bedini, 2000, p.28.
[189] Bedini, 2000, pp.125-131.

new-found lands in the East.[190] For the Medici, in turn, the gift of rare fauna from a European monarch conferred status and prestige not just upon Leo X, but on the family as a whole.

The animals that Pope Leo X received from Manuel I, with the exception of the elephant and the rhino, which were large animals, expensive to procure and difficult to transport, and for these reasons usually reserved for dignitaries of the highest rank. Nevertheless, encouraged by Leo X's example, representatives of the ducal and later grand-ducal regime probably hoped that, as the legitimate rulers of a former Republican state, they could eventually expect to receive similar honours. The animal gifts that Cosimo I sent to would-be peers and allies offered an effective means of achieving this goal, and the beasts Cosimo I received in return in many ways epitomized the species that successive members of the Medici family were typically honoured with over the two hundred years of their rule. Large cats again predominate, and the two lionesses Pope Julius III sent to Cosimo I in February 1551 undoubtedly helped to replenish the Grand-ducal menagerie with some badly needed feline breeding stock.[191] As Cosimo I's political and social standing grew, particularly following his official crowning as the Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1570, such offerings became more commonplace and, in some instances, more opulent.[192] The liberality of the Algerian captain, Huettor Caragiali, for instance, was particularly noteworthy; for in September 1569 he honoured the Grand Duke with a gift of 'uno cavallo di pilo nero, una giumenta di pilo roso, uno leone, uno gattopardo, uno struzzo, et una simia'.[193] This degree of generosity was comparable to the gifts more typically bestowed upon a king or a pope, as we saw in the case of Cosimo I's ancestor, Leo X.

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[190] Bedini, 2000, p.124.
[191] ASF, MdP, 401, cc.476 and 555; ASF, MdP,1176, Ins. 11, c.35; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19600 [18/01/2011]; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=3232 [18/01/2011].
[192] Cosimo I was given the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany in December 1569, by Pope Pius V, but the official crowning took place in the following year; see van Veen, 2006, p.4.
[193] 'A black Arabian stallion and a brown mare, a lion, a leopard, an ostrich and a monkey', ASF, MdP, 58, cc.49r.-50r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=9519 [18/01/2011]; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=9516 [18/01/2011].

This shows that the investments Cosimo I made during the early part of his ducal reign clearly paid dividend. However, mutual bonds of obligation established through the exchange of gifts were not the only means of acquiring beasts. Strategic marriage alliances were to prove just as useful in facilitating the Medici court with access to exotic artefacts from those who controlled the supply routes to the newly discovered parts of the globe. Cosimo I's marriage to Eleonora of Toledo, the daughter of the wealthy and powerful Pedro de Toledo, the Spanish viceroy of Naples, in July 1539, for example, provided an indirect link to the Spanish branch of the House of Habsburg. It is likely that the Indian hens (turkeys or peacocks?) and ducks that had arrived from Naples in May 1546 resulted from this contact.[194] His coup in securing a Habsburg bride for his firstborn son and heir was a match which cemented these ties into an even closer relationship, for the union in 1565 between Francesco I and Joanna of Austria (1547-1578), who was the youngest daughter of the late Emperor Ferdinand I (reg.1556-64) and sister to the reigning Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II (reg.1564-76), allied the Medici family to the Austrian branch of the Habsburg Empire.[195] Both Detlef Heikamp and Francesca Fiorani underline the importance of the Medici's familial ties with the Habsburgs as a crucial factor in their ability to acquire exotic artefacts from the New World.[196] The possibility that the Medici expected this to be one of the benefits that the alliance would yield, may be suggested in the iconography of one of the triumphal arches that greeted Francesco I's new bride as she entered the city of Florence. The *Arch of the Maritime Empire*, located at Ponte Santa Trinita, so Vasari informs us, 'showed in chiaroscuro many new animals, brought back from Peru and other parts of the new West Indies, under the auspices of the fortunate House of Austria', whose imperial coat of arms was displayed side-by-side that of the Medici on top of the edifice to signify the merging of the two powers.[197] It is open to debate whether

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[194] The document refers to the care of the birds: 'S. Ex.a [Sua Eccellenza, Cosimo I] m'ha comandato che ...alle anetre delle Indie sia atteso con buona diligentia', ASF, MdP, 1172, Ins. 2, c.27r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=7799 [18/01/2011].
[195] Van Veen, 2006, pp.2-4.
[196] Heikamp, 1972, p.10; Fiorani, 2005, p.75.
[197] 'Si vedeva di chiaro oscuro dipinta ...molti nuovi animali: et era questa presa per la nuova terra del Perù, con l'altre nuove Indie Occidentali, sotto gl'auspizii della fortunatissima Casa d'Austria in buona parte ritrovate e rette...', Vasari, 1568, Vol. 6, p.274; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol.VIII, 1882, p.537; for the iconographic programme and reconstructive diagram see Starn, Randolph and Loren Partridge, *Arts of Power: Three Halls of State in Italy, 1300-1600* , Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, 'Appendix 2', pp.277-8; p.219, Fig.68.

the depicted animals signified the Medici's hope to profit from the Habsburg court's access to New World fauna, what is certain, however, is that Francesco I's marriage to Joanna of Austria does mark the point when records noting the Florentine rulers as recipients of animal gifts do appear with more frequent regularity in the family archive.[198]

Cosimo I's successor, Francesco I, was honoured with animal tributes even before he inherited his father's office in 1574. An example is the well-conditioned and beautiful lion sent to him in 1568 by Antonio Scaramuccia.[199] By the time Francesco I was ready to become ruler of Tuscany, the Medici court was more firmly established and this undoubtedly accounted for the fact that the list of animals Francesco I received increased and it also included a good number of New World and Asian species, such as the gifts of a parrot and a monkey, which Bernardo Baroncelli noted were aboard a ship arriving from Seville.[200] Two 'Indian roosters' (probably American turkeys) were sent in January 1575 by a certain Ugolino Grifoni, and the following year Bartolomeo Orlandini, the Medici ambassador in Spain, informed Francesco I that Prior Don Antonio de Toledo was sending the Grand Duke 'due uccelli dell'Indie'. It is likely that these were the 'paxaros de las Indias' ('parrots from India') also mentioned by Diego Fernández de Córdoba in relation to the same donor and recipient.[201] The fact that the birds are noted by several commentators suggests that the gifts were deemed significant, but the written testimony also served as confirmation that the precious live commodities had been sent in the first place, because the animals themselves often did not reach their intended recipients. Letters referring to animal

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[198] Family ties between the Austrian Habsburg court, the Portuguese monarchs and the Spanish Habsburg branch ensured that the menagereie at Schloss Ebersdorf, near Vienna, and the later one at Prague were maintained with a consistent supply of exotic beasts from Africa, Asia and the Americas. De Tudela Almudena Pérez and Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, 'Luxury Goods for Royal Collectors: Exotica, Princely Gifts and Rare Animals Exchanged Between the Iberian Courts and Central Europe in the Renaissance (1560-1612)', in *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*, Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Vol. 3 (2001), 1-125 (p.17).

[199] 'Il lione è ...molto ben conditionato, et bello', ASF, MdP, 229, cc.136 and 143; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19085 [18/01/2011].

[200] 'Una monna e un papagallo', ASF, MdP, 538a, c.926 r.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14767 [18/01/2011].

[201] For the 'dua galli d'India' see ASF, MdP, 5923, c.215; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=3499 [18/01/2011]; for Bartolomeo Orlandini's letter (dated 10 Nov. 1576) see ASF, MdP, 4906, c.144; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14222 [18/01/2011].
for Diego Fernández de Córdoba's letter (dated 29 Nov. 1576) seeASF, MdP, 693, c. 101; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid= 17354 [18/01/2011].

gifts arriving from Spain and Portugal mention numerous casualties that died on route. A possible candidate was Mateo Vásquez's (Secretary to Felipe II) gift of a so-called 'hare from the Indies', which Luigi Dovara, the Medici's ambassador in Setubal (Portugal), informed Francesco I was on its way to Florence, though in his letter Dovara expressed doubts as to whether the animal hare would survive the journey.[202] Similarly, of the two bizarre birds (presumably South American) and a wild Peruvian pig, which the Spanish Cardinal, Rodrigo de Castro, had earmarked as gifts for Francesco I, only the two birds appear to have reached Florence alive. The 'porchetto' had evidently perished during the voyage.[203] Cesare Sardi's letters discussed below, will further highlight the complexities and challenges involved in the shipment of animals that were sourced by Spanish and Portuguese traders from Asia and America.

Fewer casualties are recorded among African birds and mammals, since they had to endure much shorter journeys from the ports in North Africa across the Mediterranean Sea to Venice. Among the beasts Francesco I received from this geographical source were an ostrich and a gazelle, which according to a 'Bill of landing' were being sent by a donor from 'Barberia' (in Algiers).[204] Two further gazelles and a 'mufrone' (*Ovis aries orientalis*), which is a type of wild sheep with curved horns, were donated by Giovanni Battista Ricasoli, in 1580, and two years later Francesco I received another gazelle from Francesco Moro in Venice.[205] These latter deer-like quadrupeds from East Africa were very popular among European collectors, and they account for a large proportion of the animals listed under the category of 'small mammals' in the Medici archive. Collectively, rare birds

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[202] Letter dated 23 Apr. 1582 'una lepre dell'Indie che cel'ha data Matteo Vaschez [Mateo Vásquez]. Non so se si condurrà viva', ASF, MdP, 1212, Ins. 3, cc.468v.-469r.;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4254 [18/01/2011].

[203] Letter dated 17.April 1584 'dua ucelli bizarrj, [e] un porchetto salvatico del Perù', ASF, MdP, 1212, Ins. 4, c.676; and letter dated 20 July 1584 'Inviai al gran Duca mio S.re [Francesco I] gl'ucelli [uccelli] et animali de l'indie quali, per avviso de mia casa, intendo che hano satisfatto, se ben mancò il porchetto che era il più bizzarro de tuttj', MdP, 1212, Ins.4, c.712;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4269 [18/01/2011];
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=4273 [18/01/2011].

[204] The bill, dated April 1581 and written presumably by Antonio Ribau di Marsilia, the captain of the vessel, lists '1 struzzo / 1 hazella'- a S.A [Francesco I]', ASF, MdP, 746, c.205;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=16969 [18/01/2011].

[205] For the 'due gazelle ...[e un] mufrone' see ASF, MdP, 254, c.118; for the gazelle from Francesco Moro, see ASF, MdP, 257, c.177; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=21252 [18/01/2011];MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=13951 [18/01/2011].

and smaller types of exotic mammals dominate the list of animal gifts that were sent to Francesco I, and it seems that this second Grand Duke may have preferred such species to larger and more ferocious beasts, because these were also the kinds of animals he procured (see below), which he kept at his garden at Pratolino and, which he asked his court painter Jacopo Ligozzi to portray for him.

Ferdinando I, who succeeded his brother Francesco I in 1587, also received numerous animal gifts. Examples include some 'ucelli di Schiavonia', which Francesco Maria II delle Rovere sent to him in 1588.[206] Three years later, in a letter written from Pratolino, the Grand Duke thanked Raffaello Riario for his gift of a 'Pavone bianco' ('white peacock') and he noted that he would welcome a female version of the same species that Riario evidently said he would try to obtain.[207] The request for a female white peacock implies that the specimen the Grand Duke received was male, which suggests the possibility that attempts were perhaps being made to breed these rare Indian birds at the Grand-ducal aviaries at Pratolino. We noted earlier that this had already been achieved with the more common blue variety. Hence, it may be that the expected offspring were the very birds which Ferdinando I promised to send to the Duchesse Eleonora in Mantua. In March 1592, Rodrigo de Castro, the Cardinal of Seville, pledged to send a 'pappagallo' ('parrot') and a month later he offered to dispatch more 'uccelli et altre cose curiose'.[208] Further exotic birds ('Aletti') arrived from Spain in 1608, though this time from King Felipe III (reg.1598-1621).[209] It appears from this that the list of animals Ferdinando I received from various donors also shows a high proportion of birds, as the only mammals listed among

[206] 'Birds from Slavonija' (in eastern Croatia), ASF, MdP, 4051, c.542;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=23510 [18/01/2011].
[207] 'Ritrovandomi io qui in Pratolino, il Pavone bianco, che V.S. mi ha mandato, è stato consegnato in Firenza al mio Giardiniero, et essendomi stato carissimo, sicome mi sarà gratissima la femmina, se ella la potrà trovare', ASF, MdP, 280, c.88v.;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=7359 [18/01/2011].
[208] ASF, MdP, 282, cc.126 and 135;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=712 [18/01/2011];
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=16739 [18/01/2011].
[209] 'Aletti' referred to a species of falcons from Central and South America. I would like to thank Dr. Annemarie Jordan Gschwend for drawing my attention to the reference in the following article to identify the species, De Tudela, 2001 (p.17); ASF, MdP, 280, c.76v.
ASF, MdP, 5052, c.545;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=635 [18/01/2011].

his gifts were some 'bears' and a tame lynx.[210] It is possible that the prevalence of birds reflected Ferdinando I's personal taste. Certainly ornithological subjects helped to define his vision for a new, naturalist inspired *pietra dura* (hardstone) artefact. But it is also likely that birds from the New World were considered higher in status than the more easily obtainable species from Africa.

References to animal gifts received by the last four reigning Medici Grand Dukes are less numerous and whilst it is highly likely that further evidence will be unearthed, the available archival evidence is nevertheless sufficient to allow broad assumptions to be made about the species later-generation Medici rulers collected. Only one animal gift is listed in relation to Ferdinando's successor, Cosimo II, and this relates to 'due gattipardi giovani, l'un maschio et l'altra femina', which Vincenzo I Gonzaga (1562-1612) sent to the new Grand Duke in April 1609, shortly after his accession to the Tuscan throne.[211] The fact that the author makes a point of noting the animals' sex and their youth, suggests that they were intended as a breeding pair, which implies that by this time the rarer types of large wild cats were also bred in captivity. Testimony from the sources categorized as 'other' are more helpful when it comes to determining the state of the Medici's animal collections under Cosimo II. Documents suggest that the menagerie was fairly well represented with African beasts, though whether these entered the collection in the form of gifts or were procured via agents remains unclear. For example, when staging the allegorical combat - *Guerra d' Amore* - in 1616, Cosimo II's *carro* (chariot) of Asia was drawn by camels from the Medici zoo.[212] In the same year lions, bears, bulls and other animals appeared in a '*caccia*' held in honour of the Duke of Urbino, Federico Ubaldo della Rovere, who was visiting Florence, and in 1618 dances performed by costumed monkeys entertained guests at the Villa Medici at Castello.[213] Cosimo II had a reputation for hosting lavish entertainments and court spectacles, and the type of beasts noted above reflect this.[214]

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[210] MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=391 [18/01/2011].
ASF, MdP, 4051, c.705;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22552 [18/01/2011].
[211] 'Two young leopards, one male and the other female', ASF, MdP, 2944, c.673;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=5114 [18/01/2011].
[212] Blumenthal, Arthur, R. (curator), *Italian Renaissance Festival Designs*, Elvehjem Art Centre, Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1973, p.107.
[213] For the 'caccia di lioni, orsi, tori et altri animali, see ASF, MdP, 4866, c.130r.;

The animal gifts received by Ferdinando II were more numerous, and documents make reference to several very generous tributes. Like his predecessor, the newly crowned Grand Duke was honoured with a gift of 'due leopardi di particolare bellezza' from the House of Gonzaga.[215] The Pasha of Tripoli, Pascià Mamet, with whom Ferdinando II was keen to secure a trading agreement, was especially generous; for the host of diverse beasts he dispatched to Florence in September 1637 amounted to a veritable menagerie and included 'di cavalli, leoni, tigri, pardi, zibetti, struzzi, e simile fiere'.[216] Relations between Florence and Tripoli evidently continued, since a couple of decades later (1659) Cascia Pascià's son sent Ferdinando II a 'gatto da zibetto' ('civet cat').[217] These animals were highly prized for their musk from which perfume could be made, and there are numerous records of the Medici receiving or importing such animals via agents.[218] Three years on, more animals arrived from Tripoli, this time from a certain Reggiep Bey, whose generosity outdid even these earlier gestures, judging by animals listed in the donor's letter:

> [...] Un lione. Un cavallo. Due cavalle. Undezi lebrieri. Sette maimoni. Quattro gazelle maschi. Quattro femine con li suoi figlili ...Un struzo. Cinque galline del pais de negri. Falconi Undezi. [219]

MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=18209 [18/01/2011];
for the 'festa a Castello...[con] vestiti da scimiotti' see ASF, MdP, 6108, cc.999 r.-v.;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=6768 [accessed 18/01/2011].

[214] On Cosimo II's reputation for hosting lavish entertainments see Hibbert, Christopher, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici*, London: Penguin Books, 1979, p.281; and Strathern, Paul *The Medici: Godfathers of the Renaissance*, London: Pimlico edition, 2005, p.359.

[215] 'Two particularly beautiful leopards', the gift was made by the 6th Duke of Mantua, Ferdinando I Gonzaga (1587-1626), ASF, MdP, 2956, Ins. 4, (no pagination, documents ordered by date:13 maggio 1624);
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=5801[18/01/2011].

[216] 'Horses, lions, tigers, leopards, civets, ostriches and other wild animals', ASF, MdP, 4274, Ins. 4, cc.220 and 377; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22160[18/01/2011].

[217] ASF, MdP, 1082, Ins. 1, cc.279 and 282;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22160 [18/01/2011].

[218] ASF, MdP, 1172, Ins. 7, c.21; ASF, MdP, 479, cc.173 and 209; ASF, MdP, 521a, c.773; on the popularity of civets for the production of musk see also De Tudela, Almudena Pérez and Annemarie Jordan Gschwend, 'Renaissance Menageries. Exotic Animals and Pets at the Habsburg Courts in Iberia and Central Europe', in *Early Modern Zoology: The Construction of Animals in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts*, ed. by Karl A.E. Enenkel and Paul J. Smith, 2 Vols, Leiden & Boston: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007, Vol.2, pp.419-447, p.425

[219] 'One lion. One stallion. Two mares. Eleven greyhounds. Seven 'maimoni' ('*maimon*' is the name given by the naturalist Georges-Louis Le Clerc, Comte de Buffon, to short-tailed monkeys, such as baboons and mandrills). Four male gazelles. Four females with their fawns.... One ostrich. Five black-feathered hens. Eleven falcons, ASF, MdP, 1082, Ins.2, cc.645r.- 647r.;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=17814 [18/01/2011]; for the 'maimon' see 'Description du maimon' in Le Clerc, George Louis, Count de Buffon, *Histoire Naturelle, Générale et Particulière, avec la Description du Cabinet du Roi*, [By Buffon, L. J. M. D'Aubenton, P. Guéneau de Montbeillard, G. L. C. A. Bexon, and the Count de Lacépède], 44 Vols, Paris: De l'Imprimerie Royale, 1749-1804, Vol. 14, 1766, p.179.

The magnificence of these gifts echoes the host of beasts Huettor Caragiali sent to Cosimo I and suggests that the most generous animal tributes made to the Medici rulers tended to come from donors in the Middle East. This implies that the Medici's zoological collections must have been relatively well-stocked with African beasts such as big cats, gazelles, civets and ostriches, and consequently these were also the types of exotic species with which a contemporary audience would have been most familiar. Indeed, by the eighteenth century some African creatures had become sufficiently well recognized so that when Francesco Baldinucci attempted to describe Bartolomeo Bimbi's depiction of a rare Indian bird called 'caracos' (a flamingo), he compared it to a more familiar 'struzzolo' (an ostrich).[220] Significantly, while the flamingo was among the animals pictured in the paintings Cosimo III commissioned from Bimbi for the villa Ambrogiana, the evidently better-known ostrich did not. Rarity was clearly a strong motivation for the creation of a pictorial record, especially when it came to fauna that originated from Asia and America, which, as we have witnessed already, were far more problematic to procure and to keep alive in captive conditions than beasts from the neighbouring continent of Africa, with a climate very similar to southern parts of Europe.

Available records suggest that the gifts received by Cosimo III, were similar in kind to those received by his predecessors. These included 'un tigre [e] un parochetto', sent to him from Tunisia by Giovanni Giustiniano in 1672, and in the following year 'due leoni' from a certain Ali Aga. [221] Judging by the predominance of avian subjects in the Ambrogiana series of animal paintings, Cosimo III, like some of his predecessors, appears to have had a particular interest in collecting rare birds, and his benefactors may have been aware of this. Giovan Winckel, for example, writing from Amsterdam in June 1675, informed the Grand Duke that arriving aboard his naval ship were 'dieci foggiani bianchi'.

[220] 'Un grand'uccello indiano di rarissima qualità e non più veduto in queste parti, chiamato 'caracos'...e simile ad uno struzzolo', Baldinucci, 1975, p.245. The identification of the 'caracos' as a flamingo derives from Mosco, 1985, p.38.

[221] 'A tiger [and] a parakeet' are noted in a letter written by Giovanni Giustiniano in Tunisia dated 12 January 1671, ASF, MdP, 1132, c.209r.; the 'two lions' fro Ali Aga are noted in a letter dated 9 November, 1673, ASF, MdP, 1132, c.298r.

Winckel's comment that, 'morti 4 ...nel' viaggio'.[222] The fact that the author mentions even the dead pheasants implies that all fourteen specimens had seemingly been earmarked as gifts for the Grand Duke. It also indicates that the generosity of the gift in its entirety could not go unrecorded. It is even possible that the deceased birds may have been preserved in some form and sent along with the live ones. Baldinucci, for example, noted that Bimbi was often asked to paint 'uccelli forestieri e stravaganti..., in occasione che ...erano ...mandati a Sua Altezza Reale da lontani paesi - e morti e vivi - per cosa rara.[223] Similar testimony is offered in Roberto Galle's letter, written to Cosimo III in September 1675, in which the writer notes that of the two pairs of partridges that were being sent by Tomaso Baines from Smyrna, one had died on route.[224] These letters offer further direct evidence of the very high mortality rate suffered by some species, birds in particular, during their transportation from the more distant parts of the globe.

The Medici rulers' wives and children also received animal gifts, though they tended to be given smaller and more manageable species that could be kept as pets. Cosimo I's spouse, the Duchesse Eleonora, for example, received 'two baboons' from one donor, and 'a kitten and a parrot' from Balduino del Monte, the brother of Julius III, who had sent the lionesses to her husband.[225] Francesco I's wife, Joanna, was sent 'some turtles' by Don Pietro de' Medici, whereas one of the couple's little princesses must have been delighted about the gift of a 'baby hare and a roe deer' she was given by Bartolomeo Concini. [226]

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[222] 'Ten white pheasants... four birds had already perished during the voyage', Letter dated 15 Giugno 1675, ASF, MdP, 1132, c.427r. By 'white pheasants' I am presuming that the author is referring to White Eared-pheasant (*Crossoptilon crossoptilon*) that originate from China.

[223] 'Foreign and extravagant birds, on occasions when they were sent to His Royal Highness from faraway countries - dead and alive - for their rarity', Baldinucci, 1975, p.243; on the importation of conserved exotic species see Schulze-Hagen, Karl [et al], 'Avian taxidermy in Europe from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance', in *Journal of Ornithology*, Vol. 144, No. 4, 2003, pp. 459-478, p.474; Paradise birds from New Guinea were imported in a preserved state, see George, 1980, (pp.92-95).

[224] 'Tomaso Baines mi Manda dua para di Pernice di Scio per V.A., che una di quallne morto per il Viaggio' [presumably the birds originated from Smyrna, since the author states that '...la Nave Bouna Speranza venuta di Smirna'], Letter dated 5 Settembre 1675, ASF, MdP, 1132, c.435r.

[225] For the gift of '...duj babbuinj' Michele Olivieri sent in 1547, see ASF, MdP, Pezzo 1173, Inserto 8, c. 356, MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=8169 [accessed 18/01/2011].
For the '... gattino et un pappagallo', Eleonora received in 1551, see ASF, MdP, Pezzo 1176, Inserto 11, cc.2 and 27; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=3221 [accessed 18/01/2011].

[226] For the '...testuggini' see ASF, MdP, Pezzo 5923, c. 250, MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22022 [accessed 18/01/2011].
For the 'leprattino et il capriolino', see ASF, MdP, Pezzo 1212, Inserto 1, c.45r., MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=17059 [accessed 18/01/2011].

Clearly animals had gender-specific connotations, and contemporary portraits often showed women and children with birds or small mammals, whereas men appear with larger hunting dogs or horses.

Procurement of animals via agents

As we have seen from the examples of gift-exchange, Africa was a key location from which many animal gifts arrived; this geographical region was also an important centre for the Medici's procurement of animals. For example, in 1553, Paolo Baccegli was ordered to bring back from Alexandria in Egypt a male lion for Cosimo I. The request appears in papers and letters relating to Eleonora di Toledo, which suggests that the animal may have been intended as a gift for her husband.[227] However, large exotic cats were typically purchased closer to home, from the Venetian markets, because the city was an important trading place for commodities arriving from the ports of North Africa. Archival records indicate that Medici rulers frequently used middlemen stationed in Venice to purchase livestock, and the list of purchases is again dominated by lions, leopards and even the occasional Asian tiger. For example, in December 1556, Cosimo I, was evidently looking to procure a tiger and exotic cats trained for the hunt, and having been informed of the availability of only one very expensive tiger, he charged Piero Gelido, his Segretario della legazione medicea a Venezia, not wait for other tigers to arrive, but to find instead some 'pardi', as these were easier to manage, and faster and more courageous in the chase.[228] Cosimo I was presumably referring to cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) in his reference to '*pardi*', since among the large cats, only this species could be trained for the hunt.[229] Francesco I was either more particular about the procurement of large cats or less interested in the purchase of such beasts, because when the humanist and philologist, Cosimo Bartoli (1503-1572), who also acted as 'Agente di Venezia' to the Grand-ducal court, informed Francesco I about the availability of a 'gattopardo' (cheetah), the Grand Duke advised him to buy the animal only if was 'agevole et domestico bene'. This turned out not to be the

[227] 'Per lo ill.mo s. Ducha uno lione maschio', ASF, MdP, 5922b, c.17v.; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid= 3333 [24/01/2011].
[228] 'Della tigre ne habbiamo per via di Alessandria havuto adviso che cene sarà menata una, essendo cotesta assai cara, non ci attenderemo altrimenti ancorché vi troviamo certi pardi [proposed reading: ora] che son tanto piacevoli e veloci e animosi nella caccia', ASF, MdP, 521a, c.314; transcript taken from: MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=9471 [23/02/2011].
[229] See footnote 81: Tresidder (1981), 481- 485 (p.485, fns.25-6).

case, as the purchase did not go ahead.[230] Francesco I also declined the agent Giulio Cesare Muzio's offer of leopards on the grounds that he was already 'ben fornito a leopardi'.[231] The comment again confirms that such beasts were relatively easy to obtain and that the Medici were 'well supplied' with them.

African animals were also sometimes procured from markets in Spain, but archival evidence indicates that for the Florentine court, the Spanish ports of Seville and Cadiz became of importance for the procurement of species from Asia and America from the mid 1560s onwards. Cargo was usually shipped to Livorno, judging by instructions Francesco I issued to his commissioner in Livorno, Bernardo Baroncelli, to ensure the safe transfer to Florence of a shipment of exotic animals that had arrived from Spain in June 1568. The precious cargo included 'tre leoni piccoli domestichi, un Gatto d'Algalia, tre cani grossi da porci, quattro Galline di Ghinea pintate, due tortole bianche, et molti uccellini di Caranà'.[232] The list of animals again confirms Francesco I's particular interests in exotic birds. Judging by the correspondence between the Grand Duke and Leonardo de' Nobili, it seems that one of the duties of the Florentine ambassadorial representative in Spain, was the procurement of rare avian species. In April 1567, for example, Francesco I thanked de' Nobili for sending 'three Indian birds' (whether Asian or American is unclear) and he asks him to procure more.[233] A year later, the same ambassador sent to Florence a goshawk from Zamora, and promised that, if possible, he would also try to acquire a pair of sparrow hawks from India.[234] In August 1570 another request was sent to de' Nobili to obtain small

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[230] 'Even-tempered and well domesticated', ASF, MdP, 229, cc.47 and 59;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19019 [24/01/2011].
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/people_details.cfm?personid=202 [24/01/2011].

[231] ASF, MdP, 269, c.13; MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19718 [18/01/2011].

[232] 'Three domestic lion cubs, a civet cat, three large dogs, four guinea fowls, two white turtle doves, many small birds from Caraná' (now called Roraima, in Brazil), ASF, MdP, 229, c.193;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=19124 [24/01/2011].

[233] 'Li tre uccelli dell'Indie, ci sono stati tanto grati.... Procurate di trovarci qualche altri di questi uccelli' ASF, MdP, 4901 (no pagination identified by date: 1 aprile 1567);
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14311 [18/01/2011].

[234] 'Di Zamora mi fu mandato un astore ..., et aspettar il tempo commodo per poterlo mandare....Io m'ingegnerò d'accompagnarlo con un paio di quelli sparvieri d'India, se sarà possible'
ASF, MdP, 4902, Ins. 1, c.27;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14380 [18/01/2011].

Indian birds or sparrowhawks ... and to dispatch them as soon as possible'.[235] Exotic hawks were probably procured for use in hunting and/or as gifts for other male dignitaries, whereas the three canaries, that arrived aboard a ship from Spain, in 1572, and which Bernardo Strozzi, the regional administrator in Livorno, dispatched to Poggio a Caiano, were likely to serve a more 'decorative' role in the garden aviary or as caged pets to Francesco I's children. The marginal comment that two of the canaries were fine specimens while the third was of mediocre quality, but that the three birds were all that Strozzi was able to obtain, suggests that the Medici's lack of direct access to the Asian and New World trade routes probably put them at a disadvantage when it came to the procurement of livestock, and it is more than likely that local traders got first choice of the available goods on the Spanish markets.[236]

Heikamp's comments that during the seventeenth century Ferdinando I developed the seaport at Livorno into one of the most important harbours of the Tyrrhenian Sea indicate that this third Medici Grand Duke may have entertained colonial ambitions.[237] There is some evidence to support this theory. For example, in a dispatch of July 1604 to Domizio Peroni, the Florentine ambassador at the Spanish court, Ferdinando I made a point of expressing his 'curiosity about anything ...from the Indies' and he instructed Peroni to make it his business to find out all there was to know about the commodities that could be obtained from 'New Spain' (parts of America) and Peru.[238] Four years later (1608-9), Ferdinando I, evidently ignoring Spanish hegemony over trade with the so-called 'West Indies', sponsored his own exploratory expedition to the Amazonian and Orinoco rivers and the island of Trinidad, under the command of Admiral Thornton. Such reconnaissance missions, as we shall see in a later chapter, were undertaken for the purposes of locating new territories for the sourcing of raw materials, such as hardstone and exotic woods for the

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[235] 'Uccellini dell'Indie o sparvieri... et inviatici subito', ASF, MdP, 4901(14 agosto 1570), see also ASF, MdP, 4901(28 agosto 1570);
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14336 [18/01/2011];
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=14345 [18/01/2011].

[236] 'A Vostra Altezza Serenissima [Francesco I de' Medici] gli mando tre passere delle Canarie, se più n'havessi havute tutte glie n'harei mandate. Dua sono eccellente, l'altra è mediocre', ASF, MdP, 582, c.209;
MAP:http://documents.medici.org/document_details.cfm?entryid=22149 [18/01/2011].

[237] Heikamp1972, p.18.

[238] 'Essendo noi curiosissimi d'ogni cosa...delle Indie ...cerchiate di sapere a minuto le cose della Nuova Spagna e del Perù', quoted in Heikamp1972, p.18.

Grand-ducal *pietra dura* workshops, however, it is likely that the procurement of animals was probably also part of that enterprise, even though no direct archival testimony about the procurement of African, Asian and American animals via agents has thus far been unearthed in relation to Ferdinando I and his immediate successors. [239] The death of Ferdinando I, in 1608, brought to a halt the Medici's plans to establish their own trading empire and Heikamp makes the point that his succession was marked by a general decline in the Florentine court's political interests in America. This implies, perhaps, that the collecting of New-World exotica was less of a priority for Cosimo II and Ferdinando II.[240] However, more concrete evidence, in relation to animal collecting, is available for their successor, Cosimo III, whose interests in the procurement of 'other-world' commodities are confirmed by the letters his agent, Cesare Sardi, wrote to the Grand Duke during his twenty-year residency in Amsterdam.

Cesare Sardi and the procurement of animals for Cosimo III

As Wilma George explains, animals were a frequent cargo in the ships destined for the Amsterdam market, and the Dutch East India Company had evidently erected purpose-built warehouses and stables on the quayside to accommodate livestock (see Fig.57).[241] Amsterdam, as we saw earlier, had become the dominant centre in northern Europe for the distribution and sale of imported goods from the East and West Indies, and Cesare Sardi was thus well placed to procure exotic merchandise, including specimens of fauna and flora for his Florentine patron. The 287 surviving letters that Sardi wrote to the Grand Duke, between 1706 and 1723, indicate that the agent fulfilled his role with diligence and care. [242] Maria Matilda Simari's fleeting comments that Sardi's correspondence conveyed Cosimo III's 'interest in rare and exotic animals' and that the letters 'make specific reference to the

[239] Pampaloni-Martelli, Annapaula, 'Le Raccolte Lapidee dell' Opificio delle Pietre Dure', in *Splendori di Pietre Dure: L'Arte di Corte nella Firenze dei Granduchi*, ed. by Annamaria Giusti, Firenze: Giunti, 1988, pp.268-275 (p.268).
[240] Heikamp notes that, 'There are no known connections with Mexico dating from the reign of Cosimo II' and that under Ferdinando II only one Mexican artefact was added to the Medici's collection, Heikamp, 1972, p.22.
[241] George, Wilma, 'Alive or Dead: Zoological Collections in the Seventeenth Century', in *The Origins of the Museum: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth- Century Europe,* ed. by Oliver Impey and Arthur Macgregor, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, pp.179-192 (p.185).
[242] ASF, Miscellanea Medicea (MM), 92,Ins.IV.

shipment of numerous parrots', prompted a closer examination of the correspondence.[243] As it turned out, parrots and parakeets are in fact the only 'exotic animals' mentioned in the letters and the first reference to these only appears towards the very end of Sardi's correspondence (letter number 259, written on 3 October 1721), in which the agent promised to make inquiries regarding Cosimo III's request for one parrot and two parakeets (see Appendix 8).[244] When compared to a directive issued in 1750, by the general supervisor of the French Royal menagerie at Versailles, for the 'delivery of eight hundred small birds, a hundred or so budgerigars and 25 parakeets', Cosimo III's order seems modest, to say the least, and Sardi evidently faced difficulties in fulfilling even this small request. Indeed, my examination of Sardi's correspondence makes it clear that, in contrast to Simari's interpretation, the agent's letters are far more revealing about what they tell us regarding the difficulties and the challenges that the Florentine court faced in the acquisition of exotic beasts via the indirect route of the Amsterdam markets, than about Cosimo III's 'interest in rare and exotic animals'.[245]

On 28 November 1721, nearly two months after Sardi had dispatched his written promise to procure the requested birds for 'His Royal Highness', the agent reported back to his Florentine patron to inform him that he had found and would shortly dispatch to Livorno a young domesticated parrot, with green, pink and yellow plumage that was 'already capable of saying a few words and was able to learn more with ease'. As for the two parakeets, the agent assured Cosimo III that he had taken every diligence imaginable to procure the desired quality of birds, but that he had found none of the true sort; and nothing of beauty (see Appendix 9). He concluded that the variety of parakeets Cosimo III had evidently asked for, were so rare and delicate that they either died on route and the ones that did arrive were sold to people who traded them. Not wishing to be found wanting, Sardi promised to entrust into the care of the ship's captain two specimens of the ordinary

[243] Simari, 1985, p.28.
[244] 'Farò tutte le diligenze possibili per trovar il Pappagallo e li due Parrochetti, che V.A. R. mi comanda di mandarle, e comp'ire alla instruzione che vi ho ricevuto', ('I shall take every diligence possible to find the Parrot and the Parakeets which His Royal Highness has commanded me to send (to procure) and to carry out the task according to the instructions that I have received.'), ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.259 v.
[245] Baratay, 2002, p.22.

sort.[246] Sardi was evidently keen to receive confirmation that the birds had reached their intended destination, for in his next letter to the Grand Duke, written three months later (27 February 1722), the agent enquired whether the 'parakeets and the parrot had arrived alive'.[247] The parrot had evidently not survived the journey to Livorno or had died shortly after its arrival in Florence. This can be deduced from Sardi's promise in June of that year (1722) that he would make every effort to replace the dead parrot and to procure a specimen with the rare qualities of beautiful plumage and the ability to speak (see Appendix 10).[248] The quality of the plumage and the ability to mimic human speech were clearly important attributes, and Sardi's diligent searches to obtain an appropriate specimen evidently paid off, because on 11 December 1722 Sardi informed his patron that arriving on board a vessel from Spain was 'a beautiful, young and docile parrot that could speak a few words, and also two small parakeets of a green plumage mixed with pink'. However, the good news was tempered by a cautionary comment that the ship that was transporting the birds from Spain to Amsterdam was stuck in the port of Jerez due to bad storms and strong winds (see Appendix 11).[249] On top of the already long sea voyages, delays caused by bad weather evidently lengthened the discomfort exotic creatures had to suffer during their transport from one port to another. This helps to explain why animals frequently arrived either dead or in a weakened state, as was the case with the two small parakeets. For, despite Sardi's assurances that the ship's captain had promised him to take every care to get the three birds to Amsterdam alive, a month later Sardi informed Cosimo III that the two parakeets had died (see Appendix 12).[250] However, the parrot did survive the voyage and was duly dispatched to Livorno aboard the ship '*Unione*'. This can be gleaned from Sardi's next letter, sent in the following year (5 March 1723), in which he expressed his hope that

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[246] To make the argument easier to follow, I have here placed the Italian text in the footnotes. 'Un pappagallo giovine, con piume verdi, mescolate di rosa e di giallo, familiare che dica diverse parole..., ed ha molta facilità per imparare. ...Per le due Parrochetti ho fatte tutte le diligenze imaginabili, n'ho veduti molti ma nissuno della vera sorte; e niente di bello: questi sono assai rari perche sendo delicati molti ne muriono per viaggio: se ne veniranno sarò aventito dalla gente che ne fa commercio, e non mancherò di prenderne due per mandarli con qualche capitano ben conosciuto.' ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.261v.

[247] 'Parrochetti e il Papagallo saranno arrivati vivi', ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.263r.

[248] 'Di rimpiazzare il Papagallo morto usarò di tutte maggiori premura procur un sorte che abbia la rare qualità di bella piuma e che sappia parlare', letter dated 12 June 1722, ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.269r.

[249] 'Un Pappagallo bello, giovine, docile, e che dice diverse parole come pure due piccoli Parrochetti verdi mescolatovi dal rosso'[...]'la detta nave si trova gia sono più giorni nel porto di Jerez ritenutavi da venti ostinatemente', ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.273r.-v.

[250] 'Li due Parrochetti son morti', letter dated 1 January 1723, ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.275r.

the 'parrot had not suffered the same fate as the two parakeets' (see Appendix 13).[251] It cannot be confirmed whether the bird did survive its transport from Amsterdam to Florence, for the very last letter in Sardi's correspondence to Cosimo III, sent in April 1723, makes clear that he was still awaiting confirmation.[252]

The collective evidence that has emerged from these eight letters that refer specifically to exotic birds is that, between October 1721 and April 1723, Sardi had managed to procure or earmark for his patron in Florence just six live birds: two parrots and four parakeets. Of these, only the two inferior species of parakeets, which Sardi obtained in Amsterdam and which he sent to Florence sometime between the end of November 1721 and February 1722, can be said with a modest degree of certainty to have reached their intended recipient, whereas the safe arrival of the parrot from Jerez remains unconfirmed. In other words, the survival rate of such species, as we have already seen above, and as Sardi himself acknowledges, was very poor indeed. This is hardly surprising, when one considers the roundabout ways by which animals sourced from Asia and South America (the main location for the procurement of many types of parrots and parakeets) had to be transported, first to Spain or Portugal, then from there to Amsterdam and finally to Livorno in Italy. Indeed, even sixty years after the date of Sardi's last letter, the mortality rate among imported exotic species had evidently not improved, because when the French writer and soldier Stanislas Jean Chevalier de Boufflers (1738-1815) returned from his governorship in Senegal in 1786 (or 1787?), he lamented the fact that of the fifteen or so rare animals he brought back to France as gifts for his friends, he lost two parrots, 'five or six parakeets', one spoonbill, and two little monkeys.[253] This implies that the number of delicate creatures that perished during the long and perilous sea voyages was far higher than that of those who survived the ordeal. Returning to Simari's comments cited above, closer scrutiny and a more subtle interpretation of Sardi's letters has revealed that the documents tell us rather more about the difficulties involved in the collecting of rare

[251] 'Il Papagallo ...non averà sofferto lo stesso disastro delli due Perrochetti', letter dated 5 March 1723, ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.278r.
[252] Letter dated 9 April 1723, ASF, MM, 92, Ins. IV, c.287r.
[253] De Boufflers quoted in Robbins, Louise, E., *Elephant Slaves & Pampered Pets: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002, p.24, for the question mark regarding the date, see p.245, fn.53.

animals and birds from distant continents, than about the Medici's 'interest in rare and exotic animals' *per se*. Indeed, Sardi's correspondence confirms that expressing an 'interest' was one thing; successfully acquiring and getting them to their intended recipients was a far more challenging matter.

Conclusion:

The sources considered here cannot provide a complete picture about the types and numbers of animals that entered and left the Medici's zoological collection at any one time. Nevertheless, my consideration of the available testimony has allowed me to draw some important conclusions regarding the processes of animal procurement and the locations from which the Medici obtained their rare and exotic fauna, and also about the particular species individual Medici rulers collected or received. The evidence suggests that the Medici's acquisition of rare birds and mammals from distant continents relied primarily on the diplomacy of gift-giving and also on the network of agents who negotiated the purchase of exotic fauna from the various strategic ports to which they had been posted. I have further argued that Cosimo I used the well-established custom of gift-giving as a means to enhance his political reputation and to forge lasting relationships with other international powers. His descendents bore the fruits of that investment, since the reigns of Francesco I and Ferdinando I, in particular, saw a marked increase of animal gifts that were dispatched to the Medici court from a widening network of allies. Alliances and diplomatic contacts with the powers that controlled access to Asia and America have been cited as an important element in allowing the Medici to diversify their zoological collections, to include species from continents other than Africa, which tended to dominate the Florentine menageries. The northern European cities of Venice, Antwerp and later Amsterdam became major centres for the distribution and sale of 'other-world' commodities and the Medici's placement of agents in these strategic ports provided another important means of animal procurement.

In each of the categories discussed above, the Medici as gift-givers and as recipients of animals, as well as the procurement of exotic and unusual fauna via agents, the

prevalence of exotic cats, such as lions, cheetah, leopards and tigers, is undisputable. Such species were clearly the animal gift of choice for many Medici patrons. The preponderance of these animals may be explained by other factors. Lions and other types of large cats could be bred in captivity, and North Africa's geographical proximity to Europe made it easier to procure such beasts, in contrast to rarer fauna from Asia and America. Moreover, the regal symbolism of lions and the popular use of large cats in masculine pursuits such as hunting and in animal combats (*caccia*) explain their popularity as gifts for male rulers, but the brutality of such rituals also made their frequent replacement an inevitable necessity. Exotic cats, as has been argued, played a crucial role in Cosimo I's foreign policy, particularly in the early decades of his rule, when numerous such gifts were dispatched to other courts. The return of similar favours confirmed that the Medici's public standing was on an upward path, and it is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that animal gifts form a principle theme in the art commissioned by this first Medici Grand Duke.

Birds and smaller types of mammals, procured from more varied geographical locations, appear next on the scale of most represented zoological species in the Medici collections. Francesco I appears to have been the first of the Medici rulers to be in a position to gather a collection of zoological rarities to rival that of other courts, and his marital ties with the Imperial Habsburg Court was a key factor in his ability to enrich the Medici menageries and aviaries with a greater diversity of fauna, including species from Asia and the New World. Francesco I was eager to advertise this, not just by displaying animals in the princely garden, but also through the channels of poetry, and Jacopo Ligozzi's zoological illustrations, as well as the patronage of natural science. The list of animal gifts sent to Ferdinando I is dominated by birds from various parts of the globe, and this suggests that Ferdinando I may have had a particular interest in the collecting of avian species. Birds are certainly an overriding motif in the *pietra dura* artefacts produced at the Grand-ducal workshop. Documents relating to Cosimo II and Ferdinando II are less numerous, which makes it more challenging to draw specific conclusions about the individual collecting habits of these two Medici Grand Dukes. However, the available data does make it clear that even at the mid-point of the Medici regime's history African fauna remain the most frequently represented in the menageries maintained by the Florentine

court. Cosimo III's enthusiasm for exotic birds is evident both from the gifts he received and from the animals Cesare Sardi was asked to procure for him. Yet, as we have witnessed, the documents referring to these are even more valuable in terms of the direct evidence they provide regarding the enormous mortality rates animals, birds especially, suffered during their transportation from one location to another. Clearly, getting rare species from Asia and the New World to Florence remained a challenge throughout the Medici's collecting history. The fact that the Florentine court made the animal motif such a dominant presence in its art, was perhaps an attempt to gloss over the challenges it faced in procuring rare fauna in numbers comparable to the more prestigious papal, imperial and royal courts in Europe, who were also able to obtain the more highly-prized specimens of exotic fauna, such as elephants, rhinoceros and even a zebra.[254]

The Medici's animal collection provided the inspiration for many of the artefacts that feature in the case study chapters that follow. A range of material objects will be examined to discover the diverse and complex ways in which images of novel beasts from various corners of the globe were used by Medici patrons in an attempt to underline their political and courtly aspirations.

[254] On the Spanish and Austrian Habsburg courts see especially De Tudela, 2001 (p.17); see also De Tudela, 2007, (pp.419-447); On the Portuguese court see Jordan Gschwend, Annemarie, *The Story of Süleyman: Celebrity Elephants and other Exotica in Renaissance Portugal*, Zurich, Switzerland, 2010; on the French court see Robbins, 2002 (Ch.2).

CHAPTER 3

Three Medici Frescoes: the animal motif in the service of political propaganda

Introduction

The last chapter examined the means by which the Medici court procured the animals in their collections. This chapter will focus on how they were depicted in Medici-commissioned works of art and what they signified. The analysis will principally centre on three frescoes that were painted at the behest of different members of the Medici family. The earliest of these was created before the *Principato*; however, its inclusion in this study was determined by the fact that it is the first work in which animals were used in the political imaging process. It will be shown that both the deployment of animal motifs to signify the family's politicized aspirations, and the *Magi* theme are important links that connect Gozzoli's frescoes to the later ones. All three elements, the iconography, the mode of representation and the contexts into which the beasts and the works themselves were placed will be investigated, to determine how the intended message was conveyed to the viewer. Another important issue that will be considered is the demonstrably frequent re-use of the same or similar animal motifs, which, by means of their re-contextualization were used to convey subtly different messages and ultimately influenced the ways in which depicted images were interpreted. The close focus on the recycling of existing images, especially iconographic elements that are frequently overlooked or treated as marginal in the available scholarship, will reveal the artful process by which Medici patrons manipulated images of animals to choreograph their family history and destiny.

The first of the three frescoes, Benozzo Gozzoli's (ca.1420/2-1497) *Journey of the Magi* (Figs. 3a-b/58), was commissioned in 1459 by Piero di Cosimo de' Medici (1414-69). Painted on three walls of the family chapel at the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi in Florence, the work was created during the Republican era, which perhaps explains why the scheme narrates the Medici's cultural and political ambitions via the medium of a sacred subject. The context of the *Journey of the Magi* allowed the commissioner to present politicised reference points in suitably nuanced and subtle way. The work has been examined by a number of scholars, some of whom have related the animal motifs to specific events in the

Republic's history in which the Medici took a leading role.[255] My account takes note of these; however, my interpretation will focus more directly on how the iconography more typically associated with the courtly arts connects with the Medici's political ambitions, both at home and in relation to the princely domains of northern Italy. My reconsideration of the significance played by the richly varied fauna depicted in Gozzoli's fresco cycle will allow me to highlight the fact that this work marked the beginning of the Medici's deliberate use of exotic animals to symbolize aspects of their magnificence and power, and that the painting thus provided both the inspiration and a precedent for the other two frescoes commissioned by Medici patrons discussed in this chapter.

The first of these is the fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (Fig. 4), begun in 1519 by Andrea del Sarto at the request of Pope Leo X and completed by Alessandro Allori in 1582 under Francesco I. The fact that the work links the two branches of the Medici family through its commissioners, and that its conception stretched across the two phases of the Medici's political history - the Republican phase and their officially sanctioned reign - has crucial implications for the interpretation of the animal imagery. Painted within the setting of the *Salone Grande* at Lorenzo *il Magnifico*'s former villa at Poggio a Caiano, the fresco relates to Dio's and Pliny's stories about the giraffe and other African beasts that were among the spoils Caesar brought back from his victorious campaigns in Egypt. [256] Scholars of Andrea del' Sarto's fresco have generally accepted the idea that the painted story of Caesar receiving animal gifts 'provides a Roman Imperial disguise... for the presentation of [similar] gifts to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*' by Sultan Qā'itbāy of Egypt in 1487.[257] However, such interpretations typically ignore Vasari's fresco, painted some thirty-seven years later, in which the idea of the giraffe as a gift meant for Lorenzo was made explicit. Traditional accounts also underplay the additions Allori made to the fresco begun by del Sarto. I will argue that both Vasari's fresco and Allori's interventions at the *Salone Grande* were crucial not only in establishing the myth of Lorenzo and the

[255] For the list of sources, see Introduction, p.9, fn.19.
[256] See Chapter 1, p.23.
[257] Shearman, 1965, pp.78/85; Kliemann, 1976, pp.15-21; Kliemann, 1986, pp.1-24; Cox-Rearick, 1984, pp.107-10.

famous African quadruped, but also in allowing the giraffe to be read as a reference to Lorenzo in the earlier work.

Giorgio Vasari's fresco of *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* at the *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico* at the Palazzo della Signoria (Fig. 5), was painted circa 1556 at about the mid-point of Cosimo I's reign as Duke of the former Republic. It will be shown that the work marked a point in the Medici regime's existence when the history of the dynasty was being rewritten and choreographed for future audiences and when the giraffe was being transformed into an outward symbol of the Medici's political power and diplomatic connections. Vasari's presentation of Lorenzo as recipient of the Sultan's generous gift has become the accepted narrative, however, a critical evaluation of the written and visual sources has led me to question the validity of the account the Medici propaganda machine wanted to promote, and to deconstruct the image to expose the process whereby the painted beast eventually came to be accepted as 'a...topos -instantly identifiable with Lorenzo'.[258]

Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes of the *Journey of the Magi*: exotic beasts as signifiers of princely aspirations

Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco cycle of the *Journey of the Magi* (1459-62) is the first major Medici commission to represent animals in great numbers and varieties. The multitude of depicted species, both domestic hunting beasts and rare species, have contributed to the work's enduring appeal but exotic beasts, such a monkey, leopards, cheetahs, and even a parrot (Figs. 5a-b/58/59) also raise important questions regarding the animals' meaning and signification. Francesco Cardini, in his interpretation of the work, has noted that the iconography makes allusions to three civic and political events in the Republic's history in which members of the family were directly involved.[259] The first and most obvious of these are the communal celebrations of the feast of the Magi, of which the Medici were patrons as well as participating protagonists. The other two reference points

[258] Cox-Rearick,1984, p.107.
[259] Cardini, 2000, pp.34-5.

represented occasions when the city played host to two international conventions. The first of these was the Council of Florence (1439-1442), which Cosimo de' Medici's diplomatic skills helped to get transferred from Ferrara to Florence, the second related to the festivities that took place in 1459 to honour Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1444-1476), Pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini,1405-1464, Pope from 1458) and Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta (1417-1468), Lord of Rimini, who had come to Florence to discuss funding for a Papal crusade against the Turks. [260] I would add to this one further crucial element. That is, the relationship between Gozzoli's frescoes and a much earlier *Adoration of the Magi* painted in 1423 by Gentile da Fabriano (1385-1427) for Palla Strozzi, which is a factor that is often underplayed, but which is perhaps even more significant than the three already noted. The following analysis will consider each of these topics in turn in order to highlight how the depicted animals can help in elucidating the work's elusive and intricate signifiers.

Gozzoli's frescoes date from what is often seen as the 'golden' era in the Medici's history, when the banking dynasty was building up its powerbase in Republican Florence and, arguably, mapping out its political journey towards the *Principato*; yet, as citizens of a Republic, the Medici regime could not at that stage make any claims for real and fully sanctioned power. As Dale Kent observes, the inherent tensions that existed between private versus public displays of magnificence, in a city that was fiercely protective of its Republican status, made it important to establish a carefully calibrated balance between how a man's patronage expressed his own achievements as a private citizen and his role and place in the greater community. [261] Kent's comments were made in relation to Cosimo's palace, yet it was probably no less important to steer a diplomatic course between these two interests when it came to choosing the iconographic programme and the setting of a fresco. Gozzoli's elaborate *Magi* procession was painted on three walls of the private family chapel in the Palazzo at the Via Larga, built between 1445-1459 by the founder of the banking dynasty, Cosimo de' Medici (*il Vecchio*). The chapel was a space in which Cosimo *il Vecchio*, the head of the Medici household and father to Piero, the commissioner

[260] Cardini, 2000, pp.30-1/34-5/43; on the crusade see Cardini, Franco, 'La Republica di Firenze e la crociata di Pio II', in *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, Vol. 33, 1979, pp.455-82.
[261] Kent, 2000, p.219; see also Shepherd, Rupert, 'Republican anxiety and courtly confidence: the politics of magnificence and fifteenth-century architecture' in *The Material Renaissance*, ed. by Michelle O'Malley and Evelyn Welch, Manchester University Press, 2007, pp.47-70.

of the frescoes, is said to have conducted much of his political and diplomatic business.[262] Given the semi-public function of the Medici chapel, as 'sanctuary and state hall', it was perhaps significant that the primary subject of the work - the Magi's progress to Bethlehem - should be one to which both the Medici and the Florentine citizens attached great spiritual devotion, and which came to be regarded as the outward symbol of the Republic's political and civic collectivity.[263]

The Biblical story of the three Oriental Kings' journey to pay homage to the newly-born Christ was not only a favoured theme in Florentine art, as indicated by the great number of surviving works, but it was also played out with frequent regularity in local pageants and processions. Although celebrated in many parts of Western Medieval and Renaissance Europe, the *festa de' Magi*, as the pageant was known in Florence, held a special significance in the ceremonial life of the city, because the Epiphany celebrations (6 January) coincided with the day on which John the Baptist, the patron saint of the city, is said to have baptised Christ.[264] The Magi celebrations, described by one contemporary chronicler as public procession in which '... the Magi went through the whole city, very honourably dressed and with horses and with many attendants and with many innovations', were organized by the *Compagnia de' Magi*, the confraternity attached to the convent of San Marco. According to Rab Hatfield, the Medici's involvement with the *Compagnia de' Magi* began in earnest in 1436, when Cosimo became the chief benefactor of San Marco.[265] As members of the *festa* committee and the main sponsors of the pageants, Cosimo and his successors played a leading part not only in organizing and choreographing the *festa de' Magi* (held on an annual and from 1447, cinquennial basis), but they also invested a lot of their personal wealth and political energy into these communal celebrations.[266] Indeed, Gozzoli's frescoes are likely to have reminded the onlooker that it was during the time of

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[262] It was in the private family chapel where Cosimo received distinguished visitors, and, as Rab Hatfield explains, at least two of the three interviews between Cosimo and the young Galeazzo Maria Sforza, son of the Duke of Milan, who visited the newly built Medici palazzo in April 1459, took place in the chapel. Hatfield, Rab, 'Some Unknown Descriptions of the Medici Palace in 1459', *The Art Bulletin*, Vol.52, No.3 (1970), 232-249 (p.236, fn.37).
[263] Ahl, 1996, p.87.
[264] Hatfield, Rab, 'The Compagnia de'Magi', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 33 (1970), 107-161 (p.108).
[265] Quoted in Hatfield, 1970 (pp.108/135).
[266] Hatfield, 1970 (pp.111/113).

the Medici's influence and patronage that the Magi pageants enjoyed the height of their popularity and splendour.[267] Members of the family were frequent protagonists in the re-enactment of the Magi's procession, and in the very year Gozzoli began his famous frescoes the part of the youngest Magi, Caspar, was evidently performed by the eleven year old Lorenzo de' Medici, a role, which according to some scholars, he also assumes in Gozzoli's painted narrative.[268] The work may thus be seen as an instance when art mirrored life. However, aside from the horses noted by the contemporary chronicler, the *Magi* theme does not necessarily help to explain the presence of the exotic fauna. It is possible that animals did feature in the *festa de' Magi* celebrations, as is suggested by one of the Greek delegates who attended the Council of Florence, and observed the elaborate Magi pageant that took place in 1439, which included men dressed up 'as Magi,...with shepherds, the star, the animals, and the manger...[and] other simulacra.'[269] Whether the animals referred to were exotic or not, in living form or mocked-up, or indeed bore any resemblance to the types of species represented in the Medici chapel frescoes, is open to question. It seems far more likely that the animals described were the usual domestic farm animals that appear in most depictions of the *Adoration of the Magi*, and that the rarer creatures, in the specific context of the fresco's *Magi* theme, were meant to add a touch of authenticity and exoticism to retinue of the three Kings form the East.[270] However, the relevance of the rare beasts and the painted hunting scenes may be explained in other ways.

The international convention to secure the union between the Latin and Greek Churches was originally staged at Ferrara but an outbreak of the plague made it necessary to transfer the Council to another location. Cosimo and Piero de' Medici had attended the Council of Ferrara in 1438 as 'bankers to Pope Eugenius', and Cosimo's financial backing and political negotiations evidently helped to ensure that Florence was chosen as an

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[267] Hatfield, 1970 (p.114).
[268] Cardini, 2001, p.24.
[269] Anonymous Greek delegate translated quote in Hatfield, 1970 (p.113); for the manuscript in which the text is found, see Gill, Joseph, *Quae supersunt actorum Graecorum Concilii Florentini* (Concilium Florentinum documenta et scriptores; ser. B, v.), 2 Vols, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1953, Vol 1, pp.i-xiii.
[270] Diane Ahl explains the presence of the exotic animals in these terms, Ahl, 1996, p.88.

alternative stage for the Council.[271] The transfer of the Council was seen as a major diplomatic coup, which brought honour and prestige to the city and to the Medici. The significance of the event in the history of the Medici family, combined with aspects of the iconography has persuaded some scholars to propose that the Great Ecumenical Council (1438-45) was a reference point in Gozzoli's frescoes.[272] Roger J. Crum, for example, has argued that at a time when the Medici's hold on power looked increasingly fragile it would have been desirable for Piero to draw attention to his father's diplomatic intervention and financial backing of the Council of Florence as one of the high points in the Medici's service to the Florentine Church and State.[273] Aspects of the iconography, such as the magnificent and multicultural procession, as well as the unusual fauna do support the notion that the Medici's role in getting the Council transferred to Florence was an aspect celebrated in the frescoes. Dale Kent has asserted that no real attempt was made in the Medici chapel frescoes at a convincing representation of the Eastern figures or the setting, yet one is struck by the relationship between some of Gozzoli's depicted figures and Pero Tafur's (ca.1410-87) vivid description of the clothing worn by the Byzantine delegates at the Council.[274] Tafur had visited the court of the Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaeologus in Constantinople, and had accompanied him on his journey to Europe in 1438; he was thus able to observe at first hand the Byzantine peoples, their attire and their customs. In terms of dress, Tafur noted that 'the men wear boots of Damascine leather up to the knees, ... to which the spurs are fixed..., [and they] are clad in... long cloaks and mantles.... These are made of fine woollen cloth, and of silk and brocades from Italy'.[275] This description closely accords with Gozzoli's depiction of the middle-aged magus Balthasar on the south-wall, a figure, which some scholars have identified as representing John VIII Palaeologus (Fig. 3b).[276] The fact that Cosimo *il Vecchio*, Piero and other members of the Medici family are

[271] Gill, Joseph, *The Council of Florence*, Cambridge University Press, 1959, pp.109/174-9; Kent, 2000, p.258.
[272] Scholars who accept the idea of possible allusions to the Council include, Acidini, 1990, p.86; Cardini, 2000, p.30; Kent, 2000, pp.312-5; Crum, 1996, (pp.404/414). However, this is not universally accepted, Diane Ahl, for example, dismisses the idea on the grounds that 'the Council was a diplomatic failure and hardly worth commemorating', Ahl,1996, p.296, fn.68.
[273] Crum, 1996, (pp.404/414).
[274] Kent, 2000, p.312.
[275] Tafur, Pero, *Travels and Adventures, 1435-1439*, trans. and ed. by Malcolm Letts, London: G. Routledge, 1926, p.127.
[276] Acidini, 1990, p.86; Cardini, 2001, p.31.

placed in the vanguard of the *corteggio* and in fairly close proximity to this central character, allowed them to be cast symbolically as the 'princely' hosts of the international convention to secure the union between the Latin and Greek Churches.[277]

The Byzantine delegation also provides a possible explanation for the presence of the exotic hunting beasts, for the large entourage that accompanied John VIII Palaeologus to Florence evidently included a menagerie of exotic animals and pets.[278] Hunting, for John VIII Palaeologus and his men, provided a welcome distraction from the intensive negotiations during their time at Ferrara, and Tafur's comments that the day after the arrival in Genoa, the Emperor 'went hunting ...with falcons, goshawks and leopards', provide some indication of the type of animals that may have been included in the menagerie.[279] All three species described by Tafur feature in the frescoes, and it is possible that their inclusion, along with the exotically clad human protagonists, may have been intended as subtle references to the sumptuous and extraordinary entourage of the Emperor and possibly also the exotic hunting practices of the Byzantine court. It is feasible that some of the exotic motifs may have been inspired by Gozzoli's own recollections of an event that took place some twenty years before he begun work on the Medici chapel frescoes, for payment records confirm that the artist was working in Florence in October 1439.[280] However, if an allusion to the Council of Florence was intended, this was not made in an obvious and propagandistic way, which explains why some scholars remain unconvinced that the event was a reference point in the work. The politicised message of the Medici chapel fresco scheme was thus discreet enough not to offend Florentine standards of self-presentation and sufficiently vague to allow the artist scope to conflate into the same continuous narrative several key historical moments in the Republic's and the Medici's history - including an event that took place only a few months before Piero de' Medici commissioned Gozzoli to decorate the walls of the chapel.[281]

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[277] Hibbert, 1979, p.67.
[278] Strathern Paul, *The Medici Godfathers of the Renaissance,* London: Pimlico edition, 2005, p.91.
[279] Tafur, 1926, p.127; Joseph Gill, mentions that the Emperor spent much time hunting while in Ferrara, Gill, 1959, p.127.
[280] The document refers to expenses paid by the confraternity *of Santa Maria delle Laudi e di Sant'Agnese* to Gozzoli for a painted shroud, see Ahl, 1996, Doc.1, p.275.
[281] Diane Ahl suggests that Gozzoli begun work on the frescoes by July 1459, Ahl, 1996, p.81.

There is generally greater scholarly consensus that the Medici chapel frescoes make reference to the festivities that took place in the spring of 1459 to honour Galeazzo Maria Sforza.[282] The fifteen-year old son of Duke Francesco Sforza of Milan, who was the Republic's greatest political ally at the time, was handsomely accommodated at the Villa Medici during his stay in Florence, and it is thought that his portrait, along with those of Pope Pius II and Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, are portrayed on the east wall of the Medici chapel frescoes.[283] The inclusion of authenticated portraits of these characters has been taken as confirmation that an allusion to this important state visit was intended.[284] The animal motifs support this hypothesis. Among the celebrations that were held to honour the distinguished visitors in 1459 was a *caccia*, staged in a specially constructed arena in the Piazza della Signoria, which involved a fight between '...un paio di lioni 'tori, vacche e bufali e cavalli e porci selvatici'.[285] It is highly likely that the distinctive motif of a leopard attacking a bull in Gozzoli's painting (Fig. 61) signified such an animal combat. Bulls are more readily associated with a staged animal *caccia* than with a courtly hunt involving exotic big cats, as represented in Gozzoli's depiction of a cheetah chasing a deer (Fig. 61). Given that the two different hunting scenes appear on the same wall (west wall) suggests that Gozzoli was not only making a distinction between animal combats and traditional hunting, but also that he meant to allude to both forms. Indeed, the fact that another well-documented *caccia* also formed part of the festivities in 1439 during the Ecumenical Council lends support to the idea that Gozzoli's image of a leopard attacking a bull alluded to the brutal spectacles with which the Florentines chose to honour important visitors.[286] Gozzoli's painted programme can be thus read as a conflation of three distinct, anachronistic events: the Magi pageants, which had such an import place in the religious and civic consciousness of the Florentine citizens and two key historic occasions when the city became the stage for national and international diplomacy. These events would still have been fresh in the mind of a contemporary audience when Gozzoli began

[282] Acidini, 1990, p.86; Ahl, 1996, p.87; Kent, 2000, p.306; Cardini, 2001, p.35.
[283] Cardini, 2001, p.35.
[284] Acidini, 1990, p.87; Ahl, 1996, p.96; Kent, 2000, p.306; Cardini, 2001, pp.43-4.
[285] The *caccia* took place on 1 May 1459, and involved 'a pair of lions bulls, cows, buffalos, horses and wild boars', Ricciardi, 1992, pp.117/149.
[286] The *caccia* that was staged during the Ecumenical Council took place on 18 October 1439, and involved bulls, boars and lions, see Ricciardi, 1992, p.117; Dale Kent relates the exotic wild cats to courtly hunting, Kent, 2000, p.306; Franco Cardini does refer to these two *caccie* though he does not explicitly link the motif of the leopard attacking a bull to these spectacles, Cardini, 2001, p.35.

his frescoes in the summer of 1459, and it is likely, therefore, that a fifteenth-century spectator would have had little difficulty in making connections between the painted images and the role the Medici played in these events, either by offering financial backing or by using their diplomatic skills and contacts.

In the process of unravelling the possible meaning of Gozzoli's frescoes, scholars have read the animal motifs as possible clues to specific civic and historic events. However, the painting, with its great variety of native and exotic beasts and birds, may also express the Medici's political ambitions and cultural values in a more subtle and local sense, which brings me to the fourth factor identified earlier. It is generally acknowledged that Gozzoli's iconography derived much of its inspiration from Gentile da' Fabriano's (1385-1427) much earlier *Adoration of the Magi* (1423), commissioned by Palla Strozzi for the family chapel in Santa Trìnita (Fig. 62). Gentile began his early career working for the Venetian nobility and he later worked as court artist to Pandolfo Malatesta. In 1420 he came to Florence, and during his three-year stay there, Gentile played an important role in importing a courtly style of painting to the city. [287] The so-called 'Strozzi altarpiece' is a prime example, for the painting he created for the rich Florentine banking dynasty earned its distinction not just on account of its portrayal of opulent lavishness, but also because it depicted a familiar scene with the full panoply of princely life. As has been shown in Chapter 1, the practices of animal collecting and their use in rituals, such as hunting or in progresses, had become a distinctive feature of the northern Italian courts, and the rich diversity of domestic and exotic creatures Gentile depicted in the work, including deer, falcons and other species of birds, hunting dogs, cheetahs, leopards, a lion and two monkeys, reflect these cultural values (Figs. 62-65). Indeed, the hunting scenes in the central lunette of the Strozzi Altarpiece portray a familiarity with the distinctive custom among the northern Italian courts to hunt with the use of trained large cats, and it is difficult to imagine that the exquisitely observed images of a cheetah seated on the crupper behind the rider, and the two leopards, one poised to chase after a deer, the other engaged in killing its prey, were

[287] Gentile is documented to have rented a house in the district of the '*...popolo* of S. Maria Ughi', nearby the former Palazzo Strozzi, from 1420 to 1423, Davisson, Darrell, D., 'New Documents on Gentile da Fabriano's Residence in Florence, 1420-22', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol.122, No.932 (1980), 759-763 (p.759).

not somehow informed by the artist's own experience (Fig. 64).[288] Gozzoli's frescoes, as we have seen, include similar animals and hunting references, which implies a strong likelihood that the earlier painting served as a point of reference. Both works thus suggest a trend whereby wealthy Florentine banking dynasties sought to align themselves with the artistic tastes and customs of the northern Italian princes. However, there are fundamental differences in the ways in which these shared ideals are expressed in the two *Magi* scenes.

Although Gentile's introduction of imagery more typically associated with the art and lifestyle of the secular courts was new and innovative in early fifteenth-century Florence, the allusions to courtly life and rituals seem almost incidental; the hunting scenes, for example, are pushed to the margins of the painting's central lunette, whereas the heads of a lion and cheetah on the main panel are almost lost amid the melee of the crowd (Fig. 65). Even the Strozzi protagonists are barely distinguishable from the Magi's cortege, which prompts the conclusion that the primary ethos of Gentile's rendition was clearly religious and devotional. It seems as though greater emphasis were placed on the lavish materiality, the use of gold leaf and other expensive pigments, and on the ornate look of the piece, and that it is these aspects, above all, that identify the work as distinctive and different from other *Adorations* produced in Florence at the time. Palla's choice of artist was clearly a shrewd one, for Gentile delivered to him an altarpiece that in its iconography and lavish materiality claims parity with the taste and cultural aspirations of his princely counterparts in the North. It did not come cheap, however, and the '300 florins' Strozzi evidently paid for the work made it one of the most expensive paintings produced in Florence during the opening decades of the *quattrocento*, reflecting the fact that at a time of its creation the Strozzi banking dynasty was at the height of its economic power.[289] Palla's economic supremacy did not last. A decade after Gentile had completed his altarpiece, the Strozzi's financial and political fortunes were challenged by their main competitors - the Medici. As members of opposing political factions, the two Florentine banking families were bitter rivals, both in a commercial and in a political sense, and, as we have witnessed

[288] On the fashion of hunting with big cats and their mode of transport see Tuohy, 1996, pp.34,162, 245,246,343.
[289] Hollingsworth, Mary, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy: From 1400 to the Early Sixteenth Century*, London: John Murray, 1994, p.41.

already in an earlier chapter, Palla Strozzi was an influential member of the party that brought about Cosimo de' Medici's enforced exile in September 1433, yet, by the time of Cosimo's return, in October 1434, Strozzi's political influence had dwindled along with his fortune, and the man who commissioned Gentile's altarpiece now found himself banished from the city.[290]

It may seem curious that Piero de' Medici should have wished to commission in the family's private chapel a work that in its iconography and appearance evoked the memory of a man who was partially responsible for his father's temporary banishment; unless, of course, the act of appropriation was intended to signal the Medici's commercial and political triumph over their former adversary. In other words, usurpation of power at a local level may well have been the fresco's most important message. There is considerable support for such an interpretation. As Mary Hollingsworth notes, the change in Cosimo's commercial success and political authority after 1434 was dramatic and his ability to influence affairs was expressed not only in local issues but also in a wider field.[291] Locally, we have witnessed his intervention in the construction and running of the *Sapienza*, and in the sponsorship of the Magi pageants, as noted earlier, begun in earnest only after 1436.[292] Cosimo's regained authority at home also helped him to influence national and international events, as exemplified by his interventions to secure the Ecumenical Council's transfer to Florence and his monetary assistance in Francesco Sforza's campaign to overthrow the Visconti dukes, a move that turned the Duchy of Milan from a former enemy into an ally of the Florentine Republic.[293] The chapel's frescoes thus provided a visual context in which to advertise this reversal in fortunes by commissioning a work that surpassed and challenged the Strozzi *Adoration* both in scale and in the secularized proclamation of the Medici's worldly and princely aspirations.

In Gozzoli's interpretation, the hunting scenes and the great variety of native species and exotic beasts are inserted in a much more prominent and self-conscious way

[290] Strozzi's net capital had dwindled from '101,422 florins in 1427 to 39,142 florins in 1433', Hollingsworth, 1994, p.39, on the rivalry between the Strozzi and the Medici see pp.31-55.
[291] Hollingsworth, 1994, p.49.
[292] On this see also O'Grody, (1989), 80-90.
[293] Hollingsworth, 1994, pp.48-9.

than they are in the Strozzi Altarpiece. Thomas Tuohy's comments that the size of a retinue and the splendour of the accoutrements, which often included hundreds of horses and diverse hunting animals were normally directly linked to the status of the prince and the importance of the occasion, made in relation to the d'Este court of Ferrara, suggest that Gozzoli's frescoes may have reflected the Medici's ambitions to cast themselves in the role of princes.[294] Piero de' Medici had visited Ferrara on a couple of occasions, and numerous scholars have proposed that the visual language used in the Medici chapel decorations recalled the courtly murals at the d'Este country estate of *Belfiore*, which similarly featured painted animals and hunting scenes.[295] Hunting was a favoured pastime of Piero, who along with other members of the younger Medici *brigada* are known to have been enthusiastic participants in the hunt.[296] This might explain why the theme of hunting, in Gozzoli's frescoes, is far more prominent and integral with the main elements of the painting - the procession of characters from a predominantly secular world. Gentile, it seems, adapted his courtly style to the Florentine setting and the devotional requirements of his patron, whereas Gozzoli's representation makes a virtue of drawing on visual sources that reflected the lifestyle of the northern princes in a more palpable way. Francis Ames-Lewis has linked the practice of exploiting modelbook motifs explicitly to Medici patronage during the 1450s.[297] His scholarship has demonstrated that many of the animal motifs were copied from modelbook prototypes created by artists, such as Giovannino de'Grassi (fl.1380-1400) and Antonio Pisanello (1395-1455), who had worked for the Visconti, the Sforza, the d'Este, and the Gonzaga rulers.[298] Examples include the image of a lion attacking a bull, which was based on a design attributed to the workshop of Pisanello (Figs. 66-67), and the portrayal of a bearded vulture and a goldfinch copied from modelbook images created by de'Grassi (Figs. 68-69). The cheetahs, leopards and the monkey, too, appear to have been adapted from or inspired by de'Grassi or Pisanello modelbook prototypes (compare Figs. 70-71 with Figs. 72-76, 77-78). [299] Ames-Lewis has suggested economical efficacy as a possible explanation for the general preference shown by Florentine artists for the 'copying

[294] Tuohy, 1996, p.161.
[295] Ahl, 1996, p.112; Kent, 2000, p.259; Tuohy, 1996, pp.342-359.
[296] Kent, 2000, pp.255-7/319-320.
[297] Ames-Lewis, 1987 (p.7).
[298] Ames-Lewis, 1987 (pp.1-11).
[299] Ames-Lewis, 1987, (pp.6-7).

of earlier prototypes rather than inventing them *ex novo*'.[300] However, the specific reliance, in Florence, on northern Italian modelbook drawings, especially when it came to the design of exotic species, can perhaps be explained by other factors.[301] Both de'Grassi and Pisanello had the opportunity to observe for themselves the rarer, exotic creatures portrayed in their pattern books, and this has frequently been cited as a key factor in the shift towards greater naturalism in the visual representation of fauna and flora.[302] The early branch of the Medici family, as I have argued in Chapter 1, were unlikely to have possessed animal collections comparable to those maintained by the northern Italian courts, and it is possible, therefore, that the more unusual creatures depicted in Gozzoli's frescoes were simply not available for study in Republican Florence. The courtly tradition of hunting with cheetahs and leopards, for example, required large enclosed hunting parks, such as those established by the Visconti, the d'Este and the Gonzaga, and there is no evidence that the custom was one adopted by the Medici.[303] The appropriation of pictorial motifs created in the milieu of the northern Italian princely courts and their re-contextualization into the narrative of Gozzoli's *Journey of the Magi* provided a means for the Medici to proclaim parity with the cultural practices and values of the rulers in the North, and also to suggest to posterity that the Medici possessed such creatures.[304] This analysis of Gozzoli's frescoes has revealed how members of the early Medici family deployed art as a medium for political propaganda, and, crucially, it has been shown that the animal motifs played as important a

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[300] Ames-Lewis, 1987 (p.3).

[301] Albert Elen, for example, has noted that the animal imagery in the mid-fifteenth century Florentine 'Rothschild Model-book' are based on northern Italian prototypes, and the animal drawings in other volumes are also largely 'copies after standard models', Elen, Albert, J., *Italian Late-Medieval and Renaissance Drawing-Books: from Giovannino de'Grassi to Palma Giovane: A codicological approach*, Leiden, 1995, pp. 69-70.

[302] On this topic see especially Scheller, Robert, W., *Exemplum, Model-book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900-1470)*, trans. by Hoyle, Michael, Amsterdam University Press, 1995; Dickenson, Victoria, *Drawn from Life: Science and Art in the Portrayal of the New World*, University of Toronto Press, 1998; Elen, Albert, J., *Italian Late-Medieval and Renaissance Drawing-Books: from Giovannino de'Grassi to Palma Giovane: A codicological approach*, Leiden, 1995; Woods-Marsden, Joanna,'"Draw the Irrational Animal as often as you can from Life": Cennino Cennini, Giovannino de'Grassi, and Antonio Pisanello', *Studi di Storia dell'Arte*, Vol.3 (1992), 67-78; Dickenson, Victoria, 'Meticulous Depiction: Animals in Art, 1400-1600', in *A Cultural History of Animals in the Renaissance*, ed. by Bruce Boehrer, Vol. 3, Oxford, New York: Berg, 2007, Ch. 7, pp.165-199.

[303] See Chapter 1, p.26, fn.77.

[304] Tuohy, 1996, p.343.

role as the human protagonists, in the Medici's aspiration to cast themselves in the role of 'putative princes', long before they were given that title in an official capacity.[305]

Rab Hatfield proposed that Gozzoli's frescoes at the Medici Palazzo set a precedent for using the *Magi* theme in a politicized way, and asserts it became a scholarly commonplace to assume that most subsequent Florentine images of the *Adoration*, produced during the second half of the fifteenth century, were commissioned by members of the Medici's partisan regime to signal their allegiance.[306] The next section of the argument will show how this idea may have contributed to the notion that the famous giraffe that Sultan Qā'itbāy of Egypt sent as a gift to Florence in 1487 became linked with Lorenzo *il Magnifico*.

The myth of Lorenzo's giraffe

In 1556, Giorgio Vasari and his team of artists painted what has since become one of the most enduring images of Lorenzo de' Medici (Fig. 5). The work shows Lorenzo seated on a raised platform from which he surveys a host of ambassadors who have arrived to pay homage with rich and exotic gifts, the most unusual of which is a giraffe, whose image dominates the top right of the picture and refers directly to the live beast that was sent to Florence by the Sultan of Egypt. The unambiguous implication is that Lorenzo was the intended recipient of this rare and precious southern Saharan quadruped, a view that has since been endorsed by historians without too much questioning. This case study will examine in close detail the validity of this pictorial claim and shed new light on the ways in which written and visual testimony worked together to form and consolidate a powerful Medici myth. The first part of the argument will focus on an examination of the written accounts and their subsequent scholarly interpretation. This is followed by a close analysis of the giraffe in its diverse pictorial settings to show how the exotic animal motif, through a process of pictorial appropriation and re-contextualization, was turned into a lasting and compelling symbol of the Medici's political ambitions and dynastic legitimacy. Observed

[305] Kent, 2000, p.305.
[306] Hatfield, Rab, *Botticelli's Uffizi "Adoration": A Study in Pictorial Content*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976; Kent, 2000, p.305.

from this dual vantage point, a far more nuanced picture emerges, and one that challenges the implied message conveyed in Vasari's pictorial commemoration of Lorenzo.

Part 1: Literary construction of the myth

On 11 November 1487 the citizens of the Florentine Republic were presented with an extraordinary spectacle, for the day marked the arrival of a giraffe and other rare beasts that had been sent as gifts by Sultan Qā'itbāy (ca.1416/18-1496) of Egypt. The animals were sent along with a delegation of Egyptian ambassadors, who had come to discuss trade between the Florentine Republic and Egypt. This was the first giraffe to be seen in Europe since the thirteenth century and it is not surprising, therefore, that Florentines were eager to record this momentous occasion.[307] Among these was Luca Landucci (1436-1516), whose *Diario fiorentino* (compiled between 1450-1516) records the events relating to the delegation under three separately dated entries:

> E a di 11 di novenbre [1487], ci vienne certi animali che si disse gli mandava el Soldando [Qā'itbāy];...Gli animali furono questi: una giraffa molto grande...; com'ella fussi fatta se ne può vedere i'molti luoghi in Firenze dipinte. E visse qui più anni. E uno lione grande, e capre e castroni, molto strani....
>
> E a di 18 di novenbre 1487, el sopradetto anbasciadore del Soldano presentò alla nostra Signoria la sopradetta giraffa, e lione e l'altre bestie; e stette a sedere in mezzo della Signoria, in sulla ringhiera de Signori, parlando e ringraziando per bocca d'uno interpetro. Fu, per questa mattina, in piazza un grande popolo, a vedere tale cosa. Era parata la ringhiera colle spalliere e tappeti, e a sedere tutti e principali cittadini. Stette qui quello inbasciadore molti mesi. Fugli fatto Ie spese e doni assai.
>
> E a di 25 di novenbre 1487, el detto anbasciadore presentò Lorenzo de' Medici di certe cose odorifere, inbegli vasegli alia moresca; e fiaschi pieni di balsamo, e un bello e grande padiglione vergato alia moresca, die si distese, e vidilo.[308]

Landucci's testimony can be summarized as follows:

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[307] Charles Cuttler notes that the last such occasion was in 1261, when Emperor Frederick II's illegitimate son Manfred was presented with a giraffe by the Mamlûk Sultan of Egypt and Baybars, Cuttler, Charles D. 'Exotics in Post-Medieval European Art: Giraffes and Centaurs', *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 12, No. 23 (1991), 161-179 (p.167).

[308] Landucci, Luca, *Diario fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516 / di Luca Landucci, continuato da un anonimo fino al 1542; pub. sui codici della comunale di Siena e della Marucelliana, con annotazioni da Iodoco del Badia*, Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1883, pp.52-53.

On 11 November 1487 the Sultan's ambassadors arrived in Florence accompanied by several animals, including a very tall giraffe, a large lion, and strange goats and rams. The author notes that the image of the giraffe could later be seen depicted in many sites in Florence. On the l8th November 1487, the Sultan's ambassador formally presented the giraffe, lion, and other beasts to the *Signoria*, the Florentine government, whose representatives were assembled on the lavishly decorated raised platform (*ringhiera*) outside the *Palazzo della Signoria*. Speeches were exchanged among the dignitaries through an interpreter, and the event was witnessed by a crowd of people that had gathered in the Piazza that morning. The ambassador remained in Florence for several months, and was maintained at the Government's expense. The government, likewise, presented him with many gifts. On the 25th November 1487, Lorenzo de' Medici was singled out for special gifts by the ambassador, when he was presented with 'scented things, in beautiful Moorish jars; and a flask full of balsam'. He also records what was possibly an umbrella, described as a 'big and beautiful ruled pavilion, which spreads out (expands) and screens'.

Filippo di Cino Rinuccini's (1392-1462) *Ricordi storici*, a chronicle continued by his sons, offers a similar account:

> [...] la giraffa e uno lione dimestico ... e presentò i capitoli e privilegi che faceva il Soldano alla nazione fiorentina, se volessino trafficare ne suoi paesi.[309]

Rinuccini's account similarly records that the giraffe was given by the Sultan to the 'Florentine nation'. He also makes the crucial point that the purpose of the gift was to encourage trade between the two countries. Clearly the gifts of the giraffe and other exotic animals are something the two observers pick out as the most distinctive and noteworthy aspects of the Egyptian embassy. What is equally significant and crucial for the purposes of this chapter is that both writers agree that the animal gifts were handed to the *Signoria*, the

[309] This part of the chronicle was written by Alamanno, Rinuccini, Filippo di Cino, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri, suoi figli, fino al 1506 : seguiti da altri monumenti inediti di storia patria estratti dai codici originali e preceduti dalla Storia genealogica della loro famiglia e della descrizione della cappella gentilizia di S. Croce, con documenti ed illustrazioni / per cura di G.[iuseppe] Aiazzi*, Firenze: Dalla Stamperia Piatti,1840, p.cxiiii.

Florentine government, and its citizens.[310] Moreover, Landucci makes a point of drawing a clear demarcation between three distinct events: the arrival of the embassy; the official handover of the beasts by the Egyptian ambassador, and a smaller, and possibly more private affair a week later, when Lorenzo de' Medici was presented with gifts meant for him alone.

Landucci's account is one of the earliest and the most detailed and objective descriptions, but the events of 1487 are mentioned in numerous other contemporary and later chronicles. Many of these merely repeat what has been said before, but with one distinctive difference: the identity of the recipient of the giraffe. Almost from the moment of its arrival in Florence, counterclaims began to emerge that Qā'itbāy's giraffe was given not to the 'Florentine nation', but to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*. Among these voices was Tribaldo de' Rossi, who, in his *Ricordanze* (compiled around 1500, published 1786) recorded 'come fu presentata a Lorenzo de' Medici dal Soldando di Babilonia una giraffa'.[311] Likewise Bartolomeo Masi's (1480-1531), *Ricordanze* (compiled betweeen 1478 and 1526) stated that 'el gran soldando di Babilonia ...mandogli a donare più animali vivi,... fra' quali v'era uno animale che si chiamava giraffa'.[312] However, when Lorenzo's trusted secretary, Pietro da Bibbiena, wrote to Clarice de' Medici, who was then in Rome, he too recorded the gifts the Sultan of Egypt supposedly gave to her husband Lorenzo, yet,

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[310] An anonymous diary (presumably written sometime during the seventeenth century), likewise states that the animals were given to the '*Signoria*': 'Adì 9 novembre 1487 entrò in Firenze un imbasciatore del Soldano e menò a donare alla Signoria un leone domestico, una giraffa, un caval corridore, un becco et una capra con orecchi grandi cascanti, un castrone et una pecora con code grosse', *Diario o cronica di Firenze dal principio della città fino allamorte ed essequie del G. Duca Francesco 1°*, Florence Biblioteca Nazional Centrale, MS, Magliabechiana, Classe XXV, Codice n.17, c.84, quoted in Babinger, Franz C.H, 'Lorenzo de' Medici e la corte ottomana', in *Archivio storico italiano. fasc*., 439, pl. I-V, 1963(a), pp.305-361, (p.351).

[311] 'How Lorenzo de' Medici was presented with a giraffe by the Sultan of Babylon', Tribaldo de'Rossi, 'Ricordanze Tratte da un Libero Originale di Tribaldo de'Rossi', in *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, ed. by Ildefonso di San Luigi, 24Vols, Firenze: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1770 -1789, Vol. 23, pp. 236-303, p.246-8.

[312] 'That the great sultan of Babylon sent him as gifts several live animals, among which there was an animal that is called giraffe' Masi, Bartolomeo, *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi: calderaio fiorentino dal 1478 al 1526 / per la prima volta pubblicate da Gius. Odoardo Corazzini*, Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1906, p. 17-8; see also Fabroni, Angelo, *Laurentii Medicis Magnifici Vita*, 2 Vols, Pisa: J. Gratiolius, 1784, Vol. I, pp.182-3; Guicciardini, Francesco, Storie Fiorentine dal 1378 al 1509, a cura di Roberto Palmarocchi, Bari: Gius. Latereza & Figli, 1931, p.74; Morelli, Lionardo di Lorenzo, Cronaca di Lionardo di Lorenzo Morelli originale dal 1347. al 1520, in *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, ed. by Ildefonso di San Luigi, 24 Vols, Firenze: Gaetano Cambiagi, 1770-1789, Vol. 19, pp.164-249, p.197; see also Lamberto Donati, who cites all the relevant primary sources, Donati, Lamberto, 'La Giraffa', in *Maso Finiguerra : Rivista della Stampa Incisa e del Libro Illustrato*, Vol. 3, 1938, Roma; Milano, pp.247-268.

it is significant that Bibbiena himself did not mention the giraffe among the gifts given to Lorenzo. What he highlights instead is a present of a bay horse.[313]

> [...] Ie mando lo iventario del presente del Soldano dato a Lorenzo ... Un bel cavallo bajo; animali strani, montoni e pecore di vari colori con orecchi lunghi fino alle spalle, e code in terra grosse quasi quanto el corpo.[314]

The discrepancies among these various accounts are almost always overlooked in modern-day scholarly literature, and while most historians draw on Landucci's diary as a their main source of information when referring to the giraffe episode, most simply leave out the comments that the giraffe and other animals were presented 'alla nostra Signoria' and that Lorenzo was given separate gifts later, the two crucial factors that should alert the cautious reader to the possibility that later commentators may simply have conflated the two distinct events recorded by Landucci.[315]

Indeed, John Shearman who is rare among historians to note the fact that Landucci and Rinuccini both state that the gift was made to the Florentine people, dismisses the issue in a footnoted comment, stating that whether the giraffe of the sultan was given to the *Signoria* or to Lorenzo 'no doubt, amounted to much the same thing'.[316] The all-too-readily accepted notion that Lorenzo *il Magnifico* was the unelected leader of the Republic has meant that the evidence relating to the Sultan's gift was never sufficiently scrutinized to determine why the gift was given and who the intended recipient was. Moreover, the chronicle accounts on which historians' interpretations are based were often politically

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[313] Christiane Joost-Gaugiger suggestion that the 'giraffe was at first viewed as an exotic type of horse', seems unlikely, since the terms *camelopardis* and/or *giraffa* were well known and used by contemporaries at the time of the African beast's arrival in Florence (see Introduction, Part II), Joost-Gaugiger,1987 (p.98, fn.20)

[314] 'I send you an inventory of the gifts the Sultan gave to Lorenzo... A beautiful bay horse; strange animals, rams and sheep of various colours with long ears down to the shoulders, and tails down to the ground almost as long as the entire body', Fabroni, Angelo, *Laurentii Medicis Magnifici Vita*, 2 Vols., Pisa: J. Gratiolius, 1784, Vol.2, Doc.199, p.337.

[315] Sources which cite the giraffe as Lorenzo's include: Laufer, Berthold, *The Giraffe in History and Art*, Chicago: Fieldmuseum of Natural History, 1928, pp. 79-80 (who does not cite Landucci and gives the wrong date for the giraffe's arrival); Donati, 1938, pp.247-268; Spinage, Clive, A., *The Book of the Giraffe*, London: Collins, 1968, p. 73; Barclay Lloyd, Joan, *African Animals in Renaissance Literature and Art*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, pp.49-52; Mosco, 1985, p.17; Joost-Gaugiger, 1987, (p.94); Trexler, Richard, C., *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991(reprint), p.460 (though Trexler cites Francesco Guicciardini whose account is based on Landucci); Lazzaro, 1995, p. 219; Cuttler, 1991 (p.168); Ringmar, Erik, 'Audience for a Giraffe: European Expansionism and the Quest for the Exotic', in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2006), 353-97 (p.377), which is a poorly researched article and also cites the wrong date for the giraffe's arrival; Belozerskay, 2006, pp.121-124; (etc.).

[316] Shearman, 1965, Vol.1, p.85, fn.2.

biased themselves and so-called eyewitness accounts tended to vary between those who supported the Medici regime and those who did not. Thus, while Alamannno Rinuccini, a onetime supporter of Lorenzo, became an outspoken critic of the corruption that attended Lorenzo's magisterial position, we might assume that Tribaldo de'Rossi was well disposed to promulgate the importance of the man who had given him his public backing in an important copper mining venture.[317] In fact, it is arguable that the pro and anti Medici biases actually fuelled the debate. In an attempt to disentangle fact from fiction and to determine the reality of Lorenzo's position within the Florentine Republican government and his role in foreign affairs, it is worth looking at the background and purpose of the Egyptian embassy to Florence before proceeding to discuss how the giraffe episode was represented pictorially.

As Alamanno Rinuccini's comments indicate, Qā'itbāy's mission had a commercial purpose. During the mid-1480s both the Florentine government and the Mamlûk Sultan were eager to rekindle trading links between the two mercantile centres. It was Qā'itbāy who took the initiative, and in 1484 he sent a letter to the *Signoria* inviting the city to appoint a consul in Alexandria.[318] The invitation was evidently taken up a couple of years later, judging from a letter written by the Florentine *Signoria* to the Mamlūk Sultan, which records that the merchant Paolo da Colle had been sent as the city's representative to Cairo, to discuss Florence's commercial interests with Sultan Qā'itbāy.[319] Paolo da Colle died during this assignment, as noted in a letter written a month after the visit by the Egyptian delegation to Florence (20 December, 1487). The missive confirms both the nature and the outcome of Paolo da'Colle's mission, and makes reference to the animals sent by the Sultan.

> *Consuli Florentinorum apud Turchum Pere et Constantinopoli, B. Salvuccio.*
> [...] L'anno passato, trovandosi apresso al Soldano Paulo da Colle, et faccendo con la sua Signoria qualche parola della mercatura nostra in quello suo regno, la sua Signoria molto liberalmente ne offerse ogni commoditâ ad imitatione de' Venitiani;

[317] Trexler, Richard, C., *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991(reprint), pp.447-49/461.
[318] Ashtor, Eliyahu, *Levant trade in the later Middle Ages*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983, p.497.
[319] The letter is dated 3 June 1486, see Wansbrough, John, ' A Mamlûk Commercial Treaty Concluded with the Republic of Florence 894/1489' in *Oriental Studies III: Documents from Islamic chanceries: First Series*, ed. by Samuel M. Stern, Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1965, pp.39-79 (p.42); Ashtor, 1983, p.497.

> [...] Morendo dipoi Paulo, parse a quello Signore mandare qua il suo imbasciadore; et perchè i nostri di là haveano presentato la Signoria sua, in segno di benivolentia et gratitudine, lo mandò con una giraffa et uno lione et con capitoli, secondo che dal decto Paulo era stato richiesto.[...] Signoria. XX decembris 1487.[320]

In spite of the premature curtailment of his mission, Paolo da Colle had evidently managed to negotiate successfully a preliminary draft treaty with Sultan Qā'itbāy, and the precious document was among the valued items the Sultan's envoy, Malfota, brought to Florence in November, 1487.[321] After a careful examination of the draft treaty by a team of Florentine merchants, who made numerous emendations, corrections and additions to the document, Malfota, together with a new Florentine ambassador to Egypt, Luigi della Stufa, returned to Cairo in June,1488, to present the position of the Florentine traders to Sultan Qā'itbāy. Luigi della Stufa had in his possession a letter written by Lorenzo de'Medici (dated 10 June, 1488, and addressed to Sultan Qā'itbāy), explaining the position of the Florentine merchants and presenting to the Sultan the Florentine envoy, who had been sent to oversee the re-negotiations of the treaty and act as a link between Qā'itbāy and the Florentine government.[322] From John Wansbrough's close examination of the documents exchanged between the two prospective commercial partners, it appears that this letter was the first direct and personal intervention made by Lorenzo *il Magnifico* in these negotiations.[323]

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[320] 'Last year, Paolo da Colle finding himself near the Sultan, and holding talks with his Governors about our commerce in his kingdom, his Governor freely offered him every accommodation in imitation of the Venetians [who had an existing trading agreement with the Mamlûk ruler] ....Then Paulo died as told us by that Gentleman sent as his ambassador [this refers to Sultan Qā'itbāy's ambassador, Muhammad ibn Mahfūz al-Maghibī (Malfota), who had evidently imparted the news of Paolo da' Colle's death to the *Signoria* during his visit to Florence in November 1487] and because our men have made presentations to his *Signoria*, as a sign of his benevolence and gratefulness, they send a giraffe and a lion with the *capitoli* [the document containing the draft treaty], which the said Paulo went to request....*Signoria*. 20 December 1487'. For a full transcript of the letter sent by the Florentine *Signoria* to its consul, B.(?) Salvuccio, in Pera, see Müller, Joseph, *Documenti sulle relazioni delle città toscane coll'Oriente cristiano e coi Turchi fino all'anno MDXXXI* (1531), Firenze: M. Cellinie, 1879, p.237, Doc.203 (CCIII); Wansbrough, 1965, (pp.41-2).

[321] The information is from the same letter sent by Signoria to Salvuccio in Pera which informs the recipient that Malfota arrived 'con una giraffa et un lione et con capitoli, secondo che dal decto Paulo era stato richiesto' ('with a giraffe and a lion and documents, which the said Paulo requested'), information and citation from Wansbrough, John, ' A Mamlûk Commercial Treaty Concluded with the Republic of Florence 894/1489' in Samuel M. Stern (ed.), Oriental Studies III: Documents from Islamic chanceries: First Series, Oxford : B. Cassirer, 1965, pp.39-79, p.42, fn.13.

[322] Wansbrough, 1965, (p.43); for a transcript of the document, see Amari, Michele (ed.), *I Diplomi Arabi del R. Archivio Fiorentino: Testo Originale con la Traduzione Letterale e Illustrazione di Michele Amari*, 2 Vols, Firenze: Tipografia di Felice le Monnier, 1863, 1867; Vol. 1 & Appendice 1863, pp.181-83, Doc. No.XXXIX.

[323] For a translation and analysis of the Mamlûk documents leading up to the conclusion of the treaty between Sultan Qā'itbāy and the Florentine Republic see Wansbrough, 1965, pp.39-79.

It was to be another year before a commercial treaty was finally ratified, as confirmed in a letter written, this time to Lorenzo, by the Sultan, on 18 November, 1489.[324]

Aside from the commercial interests, the Sultan's mission to Florence apparently had another, more personal and political purpose. Qā'itbāy's Mamlûk territories came under threat following the death of the Ottoman Sultan Mehemmed II in 1481, which resulted in a dynastic struggle among his two heirs, Bâjazîd and his brother Djem, with the latter launching several failed military campaigns to challenge his brother, who, as the elder of the two siblings, succeeded his father to the throne of the Ottoman Empire as Sultan Bâjazîd II. Djem was eventually forced to seek protection from Qā'itbāy and, in 1482, he fled to Rhodes, where he was subsequently captured by the French, where he was held a prisoner. Qā'itbāy's strategy was to enlist the help of his allies and trading partners in Europe in securing the release and return of Djem to Egypt, and thereafter to launch a fresh campaign to dethrone Bâjazîd II and to install Djem, who was seen as a man more willing to restore stability in the Levant.[325] From letters and other contemporary documents, we know that Lorenzo de' Medici became involved in the international efforts to secure Djem's release, as indeed were many other powerful individuals, including Pope Innocent VIII, Matthias Corvinus of Hungary and the Venetian Republic, all of whom had vested interests in supporting the cause of Sultan Qā'itbāy.[326]

However, the timing of Lorenzo's involvement is significant. According to Melissa Meriam Bullard's interpretation of a letter written by Lorenzo *il Magnifico* to his agent in Rome, Giovanni Lanfredini, on 13 November, 1487, it was only on the recommendations of the Venetians that Lorenzo reluctantly agreed to intervene in the mission to secure

[324] Wansbrough, 1965, (pp.45/48-9); Ashtor, 1983, p.498.
[325] Thuasne, Louis, *Djem-Sultan, fils de Mohammed II, frere de Bayezid II (1459-1495) : D' apres les documents originaux en grande partie inedits : Etude sur la question d' Orient a la fin du XVe siecle* , Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1892; Belozerskaya, 2006, pp.112-118.
[326] De' Medici, Lorenzo, *Lorenzo de' Medici: Lettere*, 12 Vols, Firenze: Giunti-Barbèra, 1977-2007, Vol. XI (1487-1488), 2004, ed. by Melissa Meriam Bullard, p.412.

Djem's release.[327] The reference to the 'Venetians' makes it clear that Lorenzo's intervention in the diplomatic efforts concerning Djem did not begin until after the arrival of Qā'itbāy's ambassadors, for the team of Venetian diplomats had arrived in Florence only a couple of days before the Egyptian embassy.[328] This evidence is crucial, because Lorenzo's part in securing Djem's freedom has frequently been cited as the primary reason why Qā'itbāy's gift of a giraffe and other exotic beasts were allegedly meant for him. For example, Marina Belozerskaya, the most recent contributor to the scholarly debate, has asserted that 'The deal between Lorenzo and Qaitbay [Qā'itbāy] ...hinged on the exchange of Djem for the giraffe'.[329] As Lorenzo's communication with Qā'itbāy did not begin until June 1488 and it did not concern Djem, it is unlikely that the Sultan rewarded him with such unusually high-profile animal gifts for services not yet rendered.[330]

The role Lorenzo eventually assumed in Qā'itbāy's campaign was to act as intermediary between Pope Innocent VIII (Giovanni Battista Cibo, 1432-1492, Pope from 1484) and Anne de Beaujeu (1461-1522), who was acting Regent of France during the minority of her brother, King Charles VIII (1470-1498). It seems that the giraffe had been used as a bargaining tool in these negotiations, for in a letter Anne wrote to Lorenzo, in April 1489, she reminded the Florentine statesman to honour his promise to deliver to her the beast she had the greatest the desire to see:

> Vous savez que autres fois m'avez escript que m'envoieriez la giraffee, et combien que je me tenne seure de vostre promesse, neatmoins pour vous donner à connoistre

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[327] 'Su consiglio dei Veneziani, Lorenzo aveva accettato, anche se a malincuore, di fare da intermediario per il Papa nei negozi in atto per portare Djem a Roma.' ('On the advice of the Venetians, Lorenzo accepted, albeit with reluctance, to be the intermediary for the Pope in the negotiations to bring Djem to Rome'), De' Medici, Vol.XI, 2004, p.412; In fact, Lorenzo may have had good reason to be reluctant about becoming involved in Qā'itbāy's campaign, for it seems that he had already pledged his assistance to the new Ottoman Sultan Bâjazîd II, who was also seeking to secure his brother's release from the French, Franz Babinger traces Lorenzo's involvement in the Ottoman Sultan Bâjazîd II's campaign to have Djem returned to Turkey, see 'Lorenzo dei Medici und der Osmanhof', Babinger, Franz C.H., *Spätmittelalterliche fränkische Briefschaften aus dem grossherrlichen Seraj zu Stambul*, München: R. Oldenburg, 1963(b), pp.1-53.

[328] The Venetian delegation stayed in Florence from 9-12th of November 1487, they would therefore have witnessed the arrival of the Qā'itbāy's ambassadors on the 11 November 1487, De' Medici, Vol.XI, 2004, pp.412/401, fn.19.

[329] Marina Belozerskaya's case rests on the premise that the giraffe was given to Lorenzo de'Medici in return for his assistance in Qā'itbāy's campaign to have Djem returned to Egypt, yet the author has had to concede, that 'Historical records are, unfortunately, largely silent on this bargain', Belozerskaya, 2006, pp.119/127.

[330] John Wansbrough, while accepting Pietro da Bibbiena's letter to Clarice de' Medici (see above) at face value, notes that the animals fall outside the gifts customarily sent by the Mamlūk Sultans to persons of Lorenzo's social standing, Wansbrough, 1965 (p.40).

> 1'affection que je y ai, je vous prie que vous la faictes passer et la m'envoier par deca. Car c'est Ie beste du monde que j'ay plus grand desir de veoir. Et sil est chose par deca que je puisse faire pour vous, je m'y emploieray de bon coeur. Et à Dieu soiez, qui vous ait en digne garde.
> Escript au Plessys du Parc, Ie XVe jour d'avril 1489, ANNE DE FRANCE.[331]

The letter was written one month after Djem was finally released by the French and transferred to Rome where he was placed in the custody of the Papal Court in Rome.[332] As it turned out, the bargain between Lorenzo and Anne could not be fulfilled because as the combined accounts of Tribaldo de'Rossi and Bartolomeo Masi, makes clear that the giraffe had died on 2 January, 1489 from a broken neck, which it suffered while trying to dislodge its head from between some tightly-spaced beams in the barn of the Via della Scala in which the precious animal was kept.[333] Anne of France's letter has been seen as further evidence that Qā'itbāy's giraffe was meant for Lorenzo rather than given as a gift to the Republican government and the Florentine people.[334] However, whilst Lorenzo's personal involvement in the Djem case may explain why Anne addressed the letter to the Florentine statesman, her linking the animal with Lorenzo does not mean that the precious animal was actually his property to give away. Let us remind ourselves of the reasons why this seems unlikely.

Firstly, Landucci and Rinuccini state that the animals were given to the *Signoria*, and that the gift was connected to trade negotiations between the Sultan of Egypt and the Florentine government. Secondly, there is no evidence of an existing relationship between Sultan Qā'itbāy and Lorenzo *il Magnifico* prior to the arrival of the Egyptian Embassy in November 1487. Thirdly, Lorenzo's intervention in the Djem affair came too late to provide a reason for the gift. In any case, Lorenzo did not play a sufficiently instrumental

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[331] 'You know that formerly you advised me in writing that you would send me the giraffe, and although I am sure that you will keep your promise, I beg you, nevertheless, to deliver the animal to me and send it this way, so that you may understand the affection I have for it; for this is the beast of the world that I have the greatest desire to see. And if there is any thing on this side I can do for you, I shall apply myself to it with all my heart. God be with you and guard you. Written at Plessys du Parc on the 15th day of April [1489] ANNE DE FRANCE', quotation and translation from Barclay Lloyd, Joan, *African Animals in Renaissance Literature and Art*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971, pp.52 and 131, fn.24.
[332] For a description of Djem's arrival in Rome on 13th March 1489, see Thuasne, 1892, pp.227-229.
[333] Tribaldo de'Rossi gives the date 2 January 1488, in the modern style this 1489, see de'Rossi, 1770-1789, (p.246-8); Masi, 1906, pp.17-8.
[334] E.g. Barclay Lloyd, 1971, p.52; Belozerskaya, 2006, p.128.

role in the negotiations to warrant being singled out for special honours by the Sultan of Egypt, nor was the mission to get Djem returned to Egypt ever brought to a successful conclusion.[335] The evidence presented here has led me to conclude that the giraffe was, as Luca Landucci and Alamanno Rinuccini claimed, presented to the Florentine 'nation' as a diplomatic goodwill gesture and to impress upon the government and the citizens the generosity of the ruler with whom they were about to embark on a mercantile relationship.

Part 2: The pictorial construction of the myth

While Florentine chronicles and other written documents provide one source for information about the giraffe episode; works of art tell their own story on why the Florentine giraffe was so readily and unquestioningly accepted as '... a *topos* – instantly identifiable with Lorenzo'.[336] As noted by Landucci, the giraffe was commemorated in numerous Florentine works of art, and before turning to the two Medici commissioned frescoes that form the main focus of the argument, it is important to establish how the African quadruped was visually represented in the period immediately following its arrival in 1487, and also to determine the validity of the claims that are sometimes made that even works that were created before the *Principato* the giraffe was meant to symbolize the Medici.

The giraffe in Florentine religious and secular art between 1487-1510

The Florentines' enduring fascination with the graceful southern Saharan quadruped can be gauged from the many works of art that commemorate the beast. The giraffe became a popular motif and, as the following discussion will highlight, its image was celebrated in a variety of pictorial contexts. Scenes depicting the *Magi* were evidently deemed a particularly suitable setting for the exotic creature, as there are numerous Florentine paintings that feature a giraffe. Examples include Domenico Ghirlandaio's (1448/9-1494) *Adoration* scene in the Tornabuoni chapel at Santa Maria Novella (ca.1485-90)

[335] Djem was eventually freed and taken to Rome in 1489, though he was never actually handed over to Qā'itbāy; he died in Naples in 1495, Thuasne, 1892, p.365.
[336] Cox-Rearick, 1984, p.107; see also Shearman, 1965, Vol.I, p.85; Barclay Lloyd, 1971, pp.49-53; Joost-Gaugiger, 1987, 91-99; Trexler, 199, p.460, Belozerskaya, 2006, pp.86-129.

(Figs. 79a-b), Raffaello Botticini's (1477-1520) *Adoration tondo* (ca.1495) (Figs. 80a-b) and Andrea del Sarto's (1486-1530) *Coming of the* Magi fresco in the *Chiostrino dei Voti* at Santissima Annunziata of 1510 (Figs. 81a-b). The three works, executed in Florence between 1487 and 1510, will be considered to illustrate the following argument. The *Magi* theme, as has been noted earlier, was frequently linked with the Medici family and the placement of the exotic creature within that narrative has meant that the giraffe was often been explained as a Medici *topos*. I shall argue against such claims. Firstly, even in works commissioned by well-known Medici supporters, claims of a link between the giraffe and Lorenzo cannot be supported. Secondly, the *Magi* theme remained popular even after the Medici were expelled from Florence in 1494; the paintings by Botticini's and del Sarto's fall into this category and both feature a giraffe as part of the iconography. Thirdly, the *Magi* theme was not the only artistic context in which the unusual animal appeared, for its image was celebrated and commemorated in many other types of works, and in scenes that had no connection to the Medici family.

The giraffe depicted in the top right corner of Ghirlandaio's *Adoration of the Magi* fresco, which was in the process of being painted when the Egyptian embassy arrived in Florence in 1487, is likely to be among the earliest Florentine works of art to feature such an animal.[337] Jean Cadogan's comments that the exotic beast has frequently been linked to Lorenzo de' Medici, underline the often unqualified assumption that the beast was meant as a reference to Lorenzo.[338] The following analysis will question and challenge that assumption. The *Adoration* scene is located on the upper register of the west wall of the Sanctuary of Santa Maria Novella (Fig. 82) and forms part of a much larger fresco cycle in a chapel dedicated to preserve the memory of one of Florence's oldest families - the Tornabuoni. Giovanni Tornabuoni had managed the Florentine branch of the Medici bank from 1443 and, as the uncle of Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, he was a well known and life-long

[337] Charles Cuttler's research confirms that images of giraffes were not typically found in Western European religious art until the late fifteenth century; he cites just one exception: a very unrealistic giraffe that appears in a scene of 'St. Anthony on His Way to St. Paul', in *Les Belles Heures* (folio 191v.), created by the Limburg Brothers, in ca. 1410, New York: The Metropolitan Museum (the Cloisters), (pp.164/167, Fig.3).
[338] Cadogan, Jean K., *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2000, p.240.

supporter of the Medici regime.[339] Rab Hatfield's comments cited earlier, that members of the Medici's partisan regime used the *Magi* theme to signal their allegiance to the Medici, may have contributed to the notion of seeing the giraffe as a Medici symbol.[340] Yet given the close familial and business ties between the commissioner and the Medici, there was no actual need for using the *Magi* theme or the giraffe to underline a political connection. There are other explanations for the animal's inclusion in the fresco. The theme of the three Oriental Kings was an expected scene in a narrative programme that celebrated the life of the Virgin Mary. Moreover, the story of the *Magi* traditionally featured depicted animals, native ones to begin with, and from the fifteenth century increasingly also exotic beasts, to signify the foreign origins of the Magi. The inclusion of a giraffe was thus appropriately matched to the theme, because the beast provided an additional touch of eastern authenticity. Cadogan draws attention to the fact that the contract drawn up between the patron and Ghirlandaio, on 1 September 1485, contains an unusual marginal note stating that the decorative programme should feature '...animals, birds, and beasts, of whatever kind', and that all designs should be approved by Tornabuoni.[341] The fact that the note was inserted at all suggests that the patron was evidently particular about this aspect of the iconography. This, combined with the knowledge that a live version of the animal did not appear in Florence until 1487, suggests the possibility that the giraffe may have been added as part of the changes that were made to the west wall after 1486.[342] It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that the Egyptian embassy was a likely source of inspiration for the beast's unprecedented appearance in a work contemporaneous to these events, especially given the strong likelihood that both the patron, Giovanni Tornabuoni (1428-1490), and Ghirlandaio would have been present in Florence at the time and could have witnessed the occasion.[343] The positioning of the *Adoration* scene also undermines the idea that an allusion to Lorenzo was intended. The giraffe's appearance high up, in the upper margins of the fresco's third register in the shadowy setting of the Sanctuary (Fig. 82), makes it

[339] Cadogan, 2000, p.238.
[340] Hatfield, 2000, p.305.
[341] Cadogan, 2000, p.240; on the contract see Chambers, David, S., *Patrons and Artists in the Italian Renaissance*, London: Macmillan, 1970, p.175.
[342] Cadogan suggests that changes to the wall devoted to the depiction of scenes from the life of the Virgin were made after the Tornabuoni were granted full patronage rights over the chapel in October 1486, Cadogan, 2000, p.240.
[343] Cadogan, 2000, p.240.

difficult to see the beast, which probably explains why the scene is only rarely reproduced in the scholarly literature. This prompts the conclusion that if a political message were intended, one would have expected the scene to be more prominently located and linked more directly to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, whose image is represented in a lower scene. Furthermore, whilst Vasari praised Ghirlandaio's *Adoration* scene for its 'great number of men, horses, and dromedaries and other various things', he failed to mention the giraffe, the most noteworthy and remarkable creature among the depicted beasts, which he, as someone intimately acquainted with Medici affairs and always ready to promote their cause, surely would have done if its presence within the scene was somehow more significant than the other beasts, especially since he later painted the scene that endorsed the idea of the giraffe as a gift meant for Lorenzo.[344] A far more likely explanation for the presence of the African quadruped in the iconography of Ghirlandaio's fresco was the animal's capacity to imbue a fairly standard and frequently repeated religious scene with new vigour and an added touch of exoticism.

The *Magi* theme remained popular in Florentine religious art even after the Medici's enforced exile from Florence, between 1494 and 1512, and both Botticini's *tondo* of *The Adoration of the Magi* and Andrea del Sarto's fresco of *The Journey of the Magi*, are painted depictions of the subject that date from this period. The political climate, following Piero de'Medici's (Lorenzo's son) expulsion was defined by a renewed ethos to reinvigorate and reassert the city's Republican constitution, and the new 3,000-member *Consiglio Maggiore* (Great Council) that was formed in December 1494, became, as John Hale has put it, 'the supreme symbol of the city's rejection of the Medici'.[345] These circumstances make it less likely that the *Magi* theme was used to demonstrate pro-Medicean sympathies, and they also undermine the idea that the depicted giraffe in each of the two paintings was meant as an allusion to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*. If anything, such works indicate that at the turning point of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the appearance of a giraffe in Florentine depictions of the *Magi* was becoming more commonplace, which

[344] 'Nella quinta [storia] si veggono arrivare i Magi in Bettelem con gran numero di uomini, cavalli e dromedarii, et altre cose varie: storia certamente accomodata.' Vasari, 1568, Vol 3, p.486; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol.III, 1878, p.264.
[345] Hale, John R. *Florence and the Medici*, London: Phoenix Press, 2001 (2004 reprint), p.89.

highlights the fact that the story of the Eastern Kings was clearly deemed an appropriate pictorial context to commemorate the unusual creature that had once visited the city.

However, the story of the *Magi* was not the only narrative setting in which the animal appeared. The image of the giraffe was also celebrated in other works of art, in scenes that had no connection to the Medici. Examples include religious paintings, such as Mariotto Albertinelli's (1474-1515) *Creation and Fall of Man* of ca.1513-14, and secular work, such as Piero di Cosimo's (1461-1521) *Vulcan and Aeolus* of ca.1495-1500 (Fig. 9).[346] The appearance of the exotic creature in works that resist ideological or political interpretations supports the case that at this stage in the Republic's history, the giraffe, as an artistic motif, was not yet regarded as a political symbol.[347] Instead, the giraffe's increasing popularity in Florentine visual culture makes clear that the animal was celebrated on its own terms: for its uniqueness, its rarity and perhaps, and, in the case of Piero di Cosimo, also because of the artist's deep fascination with the 'cosa che la natura fa per istranezza'.[348] Piero di Cosimo's predilection for the depiction of animal subjects must have influenced his pupil Andrea del Sarto, for the latter's design of the giraffe in the fresco at Santissima Annunziata is generically very similar to that in the *Vulcan and Aeolus* painting.[349] This suggests that practices intrinsic to the workshop, especially the passing on of particular skills and the exchange of pictorial models, is another important aspect to take into account when attempting to explain the presence and meaning of the giraffe in Florentine art.

The use of prototypes, as we have seen in the case of Gozzoli's fresco, was common practice at the time and it is worth considering this aspect briefly in relation to the depiction of the giraffe, as this will become relevant in the Medici commissioned fresco considered next. It is not possible to determine whether Ghirlandaio's portrayal of the

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[346] Albertinelli, Mariotto, *Creation and Fall of Man*, 1513-1514, Oil on panel, 56.2 x 165.5 cm, The Courtauld Gallery, London, Acquisition Gambier-Parry, Mark; bequest; 1966, P.1966.GP.6, Copyright: The Samuel Courtauld Trust.

[347] 'The strangeness created by nature', Sharon Fermor comments on the inherent difficulties involved in assigning political and ideological significance to Piero di Cosimo's *Vulcan and Aeolus*, Fermor, Sharon, *Piero di Cosimo: Fiction, Invention and Fantasìa*, London: Reaktion Books, 1993, p.80.

[348] Vasari,1568,Vol 4, p.62; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.134.

[349] According to Vasari, Andrea del Sarto spent some time learning his trade in Piero di Cosimo's studio, Vasari, 1568, Vol. IV, p.343; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, p.7.

animal was based on his personal observations, or whether he used an existing visual model. Given the proximity of the fresco to the events of the Egyptian embassy, and the relatively convincing naturalism, it is feasible that the image was created from life. Yet there is also something mannered and stilted about the quadruped's gait that could indicate the use of an existing drawing or print. An early fifteenth-century drawing by the merchant Ciriaco d'Ancona (1391-1452) of a giraffe he had observed in Cairo during his tour of the Levant was widely known and copied and it is possible that either the original (destroyed in a fire in 1514) or a copy, such as the version now in the Bibliotheca Medicea-Laurenziana in Florence, could have inspired Ghirlandaio's giraffe motif.[350] A more likely source that is also known to have been in circulation at the time was a late fifteenth-century Florentine engraving that shows the giraffe in a similar profile pose, and also the mahout who is leading the animal. This figure, both in dress and stance, resembles the turbaned keeper portrayed in Ghirlandaio's fresco fairly closely (Fig. 83). Though which came first, or whether the latter was based on the former or vice versa, is impossible to say. Both Raffaello Botticini, who was eleven and Andrea del Sarto, who was only one when the Egyptian embassy arrived, had to rely on existing visual images for the depiction of the giraffe. It seems curious that Botticini did not make use of the prototype image of the giraffe in the Tornabuoni chapel, given his association with the late Ghirlandaio workshop.[351] Instead, he depicted the beast in three-quarter view, similar to the way the animal is portrayed in del Sarto's *The Journey of the Magi* and in Piero di Cosimo's *Vulcan and Aeolus*. The generic similarity in the portrayal of the beast suggests that all three artists may have relied on the same visual prototype, though the giraffe depicted in Piero's picture is the most naturalistic of the three. We know from Vasari that Piero had a special interest in depicting animals and that he had created a now lost book of animal drawings.[352] Although little documentary evidence exists on Piero's life and career during the late 1480s, it is conceivable that he was working in Florence in 1487 and that he could have had opportunity to see and perhaps draw the giraffe, especially since his family house was

[350] For the Florentine copy of the drawing by Cyriacus of Ancona, see Bibliotheca Medicea-Laurenziana, Florence, MS. Ashb. 1174, c.143v.; for another copy of Ciriaco d'Ancona's giraffe, see MS. Lat. misc.d. 85, fol.73r., Oxford: Bodleian Library.
[351] Olson, Roberta J.M., *The Florentine Tondo*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p.239.
[352] Cosimo Bartoli later presented the book to Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, Vasari, 1568, Vol 4, p.66; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.138.

actually in the Via della Scala, the very street where the creature was housed after its arrival in Florence.[353] If this hypothesis is correct, it is possible that Piero could have been the author of the as yet unidentified visual prototype used by Botticini and Andrea del Sarto. In all three of the *Adoration* scenes discussed above and also in Piero di Cosimo's *Vulcan and Aeolus*, the giraffe and its keeper are placed in the top right middle-distance of the composition. This not only established a common link between the four works, but, significantly, it set a paradigmatic precedent for later depictions of the giraffe motif.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this brief analysis of Florentine works of art that were created before the *Principato*, and that fall outside the orbit of Medici commissions, is that claims that the giraffe acted as some form of *topos* for Lorenzo cannot be substantiated. Instead, the African beast's appearance in these paintings can be explained in terms of the Florentine peoples' enjoyment of an exotic curiosity that had once briefly touched their lives, and whose image they wanted to preserve for posterity. Moreover, the argument has made clear that in the two and a half decades that elapsed between Ghirlandaio's depiction of the giraffe in the Sanctuary of Santa Maria Novella and Andrea del Sarto's portrayal of the animal in the Chiostrino de' voti at Santissima Annunziata, the African beast had not only become part of an established pictorial tradition in Florentine art, but also that through the use of models and the compositional positioning of the animal, the image of the giraffe had become visually codified into a recognizable Florentine icon. Leo X's appropriation of this powerful visual paradigm in a fresco painted in the *Salone Grande* of his father Lorenzo *il Magnifico*'s former villa at Poggio a Caiano, marks the first step in the Medici's transformation of the giraffe from a civic icon into a classically disguised *topos* of Lorenzo.

Andrea del Sarto's contribution to the fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (1519-1521)

The election of Lorenzo's son, Giovanni, as Pope Leo X in 1513, as has been noted already, marked the reassertion of the family's interests on the Florentine political scene. This was a triumph worth celebrating on a grand scale, and it was perhaps a symbolic

[353] Tax records from 1498 confirm that the family house was in Via della Scala, Fermor, 1993, p.13.

gesture of gratitude that the chosen location for Leo X's artistic patronage was the villa that had been Lorenzo's pride and joy and whose decorations had had to be abandoned when the family was exiled from Florence in 1494. According to Vasari, Leo X's plan was to fulfil his father's wishes and to have the walls of the *Salone Grande* decorated with a series of images representing episodes from Roman history.[354] The undertaking was huge and complex, and involved many artists, including Andrea del Sarto and the rest of the team of painters who had formerly worked with him at Santissima Annunziata. Paolo Giovio, historian and confidante to Leo X, was put in charge of the conceptual programme for the frescoes.[355] Andrea del Sarto was assigned the fresco entitled *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (Fig. 4) on the entrance wall of the *Salone* and, according to Vasari, was to represent the moment 'quando a Cesare è presentato il tributo di tutti gl'animali orientali'.[356] Both John Shearman and Julian-Matthias Kliemann maintain that the fresco's primary role was to draw a parallel between the animal gifts presented to Caesar and those supposedly given to *Lorenzo il Magnifico* in 1487.[357] Yet was this the unequivocal message intended by the Papal patron, the artistic director and the painter? Vasari makes no mention of such a connection, and the fact that Janet Cox-Rearick interprets the scene to refer to gifts received by Leo X, implies that the painted scene as we now encounter it, in its completed state, lent itself to differing interpretations.[358] Moreover, what previous scholarly interpretations of the fresco tend to underplay is the fact that the painting was created in two phases and by two very different artists, which probably meant that the fresco as it was left by del Sarto, following the death of Leo X in December 1521, signified something very different from the work after its completion by Alessandro Allori (1535-1607) in 1582. What follows will re-examine the possible meaning of the painted birds and beasts in the part of the fresco executed by Andrea del Sarto, and, in the process question the idea that

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[354] 'La quale opera aveva fatto cominciare la liberalità di papa Leone per memoria di Lorenzo suo padre, che tale edifizio aveva fatto fabbricare e di ornamenti e di storie antiche a suo proposito fatto dipignere' (The said work has been undertaken by the liberality of Pope Leo in memory of his his father Lorenzo, who had caused the building to be built, and who had intended it to be decorated with stories and ornaments from antiquity'), Vasari, 1568, Vol 4, p.511; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, p.195.

[355] The artists were del Sarto, Franciabigio, Andrea di Cosimo Feltrini and Pontormo. The information derives from Cox-Rearick, 1984, pp.88-9.

[356] 'When Caesar is presented with a tribute of oriental animals' (see also fn.33 above), Vasari, 1568, Vol. 4, p.394; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, p.35; Vasari, 1966-1987, Vol. 4, p.394.

[357] Shearman, 1965, p.87;Klieman, 1976, pp.15-21; Kliemann, 1986, pp.9/12-6.

[358] Cox-Rearick, 1984, p107.

the painted creatures can be seen as a straightforward allusion to animal gifts made to Lorenzo and Leo X (Fig. 84).[359]

Vasari's comments that the fresco depicts the moment 'when Caesar is presented with a tribute of oriental animals', presents us with the first anomaly to be addressed, for the respective accounts in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* and in Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, which were widely known classical texts and the likely sources of inspiration for del Sarto's painted story, agree that the giraffe featured as the star exhibit in a triumph given by Caesar in 46 BCE.[360] We only have Vasari's word that in del Sarto's fresco that story was altered to show Caesar receiving animal gifts from foreign powers.[361] Moreover, Janet Cox-Rearick questions the assumption that the figure identified by Vasari as 'Cesare' referred to Julius Caesar. Instead, she observes that the classical figure in del Sarto's painting can probably be identified as the Emperor Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus (63 BCE-14 CE), who had received animal gifts from the rulers of India.[362] Given the inclusion of the giraffe, an animal that in Vasari's day was known to be of African origin, this hypothesis seems questionable. However, Cox-Rearick's departure from traditional accounts, suggests that the scene leaves room for differing interpretations. Vasari had been del Sarto's pupil and it seems probable that he was familiar with his master's fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*. Furthermore, Vasari later owned the *chiaroscuro modello* that has generally been identified as Andrea del Sarto's preparatory study for the fresco (Fig. 85).[363] This prompts the conclusion that Vasari would have known what del Sarto's depicted scene was meant to represent, and that he was right in identifying the picture as one depicting Caesar being presented with animal gifts. Yet, if anything, the discrepancies between del Sarto's *modello* and the fresco raise more questions than they solve. From the *modello* it appears that del Sarto initially planned a fairly straightforward representation of the story as described by Vasari, insofar as the entire

[359] Fig.84 shows the section painted by Andrea del Sarto between 1519-21, the section painted by Alessandro Allori, with the exception of the semi-nude figure in the front right-hand corner, has been omitted. My cropping of the image replicates the reconstruction proposed by Shearman, 1965, Plates 75a-b.
[360] See Chapter 2 in this study for Dio and Pliny's accounts of Ceasar's Triumph.
[361] Dio, 1961, Vol.4, p.253; Pliny the Elder, 2004, p.117.
[362] Cox-Rearick, 1984, pp.108-10, fn.113.
[363] Shearman, 1965, p.87; the *modello*, attributed to Andrea del Sarto, is now Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, Fonds des dessins et miniatures, Inv.1673r.

composition was devised to make clear that the rare quadruped, depicted in the foreground of the picture, together with other animal gifts, was meant for the emperor seated at top of the steps. The prominent positioning has the effect of bringing the exotic creature much closer to the spectator than in the images discussed earlier, and demonstrates del Sarto's willingness to depart from the established mode of depicting the giraffe. Yet, curiously, in the fresco itself the animal is cast into the background of the painted scene, similar to the compositional format he had used ten years earlier in his fresco at Santissima Annunziata. This has meant that the connection between the giraffe and the figure of Caesar is entirely lost in the fresco, and indeed, in the painted version of the Caesar story the Emperor's gaze is focused not on the animal tributes, but on the group of characters next to him. There is no written evidence to explain the discrepancies between the *modello* and the *Salone Grande* fresco. However, Vasari's comments that del Sarto travelled to Rome to study the works of Michelangelo and Raphael have been picked up as a possible explanation for the changes by a number of modern-day historians.[364] John Shearman, for example, has argued that the compositional changes may have resulted from a discussion of the *modello* with Leo X, or that they were influenced by the artist's encounter with Rapahel's *School of Athens*.[365] These explanations seem somewhat strained. Firstly, Vasari did not actually state at what point in del Sarto's career the artist undertook his supposed journey to Rome. Secondly, apart from the positioning of the giraffe, and the substitution of the tall, striding figure in the foreground of the *modello* for a dwarf seated on the lowest step in the painting, the changes to the rest of the composition seem insufficiently significant to have been made as a result of a career-changing trip to Rome (as Vasari suggested), or a discussion with the patron. Nevertheless, the main discrepancy, the changed positioning of the giraffe, has the effect of diminishing its presence, while giving far greater emphasis to the animals depicted in the foreground. This casts doubts on Vasari's explanation that the fresco portrayed the moment 'when Caesar was presented with a tribute of oriental animals', and consequently also the idea that a parallel to Lorenzo was intended. Instead, the placement of the giraffe further back in the composition, suggests the strong possibility that del Sarto's painted scene alluded more generally to Caesar's successful campaigns in Africa, as described by

[364] Vasari, 1568, Vol 4, p.394; Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. V, 1880, pp.55-6; Shearman, 1965, p.86, fn.2.
[365] Shearman, 1965, pp. 86-8; Cox-Rearick, 1984, p.107; Kliemann, 1986, p.12.

Pliny the Elder and Dio. In other words, the giraffe was given the allegorical role of representing the East, as it had done in his earlier fresco of *The Journey of the Magi*.[366]

Shearman's suggestion that the inspiration for the inclusion of the other creatures, the monkeys, the parrots, the civet cat and the chameleon in the box held by the dwarf, may have derived from del Sarto's direct observations of the animals in Leo X's menagerie in the Belvedere gardens in Rome, is again based on Vasari.[367] The connection between Vasari's list of animals in the Leo X's papal menagerie in the Cortile del Belvedere and those represented in del Sarto's painting has prompted the idea that animal gifts received by Leo X may have been another reference point in del Sarto's fresco. Furthermore this has led to the long-accepted notion that the artist's animal images were based on the real thing.[368] However, my discovery of a previously unpublished pen and wash study in a manuscript book kept in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe in Florence that shows a giraffe, a chameleon, a civet cat and a close-up of the civet's head with its pointy teeth, brings this assumption into question (Fig. 86).[369] The small drawing is undated and unsigned and forms part of a larger collection of designs that have been pasted onto the pages of a manuscript book, entitled *Giornale de Animali*.[370] What is significant about the study is that it portrays the exact same creatures as those shown in del Sarto's fresco and that the animals are depicted

[366] It has been suggested that the sheep and rams may be a reference to similar animals described by Luca Landucci, Pietro da Bibbiena and others as being part of the gifts sent by the Sultan of Egypt (see above). However, if the painting were meant to allude to the Egyptian embassy in 1487, it seems unlikely that these lesser animal gifts would have been accorded a greater significance than the giraffe. It is more plausible, therefore, that the African ungulates were simply another reference to the lands conquered by Caesar. Shearman, 1965, p.85; Cox-Rearick, 1984, p.107; Kliemann, 1986, p.12.

[367] Shearman, 1965, p.88; Vasari noted that Leo X's animal collection included: 'il cameleonte, i zibetti, le scimie, i papagalli, i lioni, i liofanti et altri animali più stranieri' (see also fn.35 above), Vasari, 1568,Vol. 4, p.197; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.362.

[368] On the papal menagerie see Bedini, 2000, p.27/56; on the relationship between Vasari's comments and del Sarto's painted animals see also Cox-Rearick, 1984, p.107; Kliemann, 1976, pp.17-19.

[369] Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Florence (GDSU), *Giornale de Animali* (18752F-18937F), (Nineteenth-century cover inscription: Disegni scarti di figura e animali dal numero 18752 al 18937), No.18930F.

[370] The pen and wash study forms part of a collection of 139 designs that have each been pasted onto the pages of a bound manuscript book, entitled *Giornale de Animali*, now kept in the Uffizi's Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, in Florence. Variations in quality, style and approach indicate that the images were created at different times and by numerous anonymous artists. Roberto Ciardi and Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi have proposed that the *Giornale* was compiled in the second half of the seventeenth century and that the lettering, the binding and the parchment used, confirm the book to have been created for the Grand-ducal Court, and, more specifically, that the bindings can be linked to similar manuscript-books executed for Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici (1617-1675), who is known to have been an enthusiastic art collector; Ciardi, Roberto Paolo e

in an almost identical manner (although in the fresco the image of the giraffe has been painted in reverse), as can be seen from these comparative images (Figs. 86-91). For example, the pose of the civet and the chameleon with its curling tail and strangely angled rear left leg, leave little doubt that there is an extremely strong correlation between the *Giornale de Animali* sheet and the painted creatures in del Sarto's painting.[371] The pertinent fact that the drawing was in the Medici's art collection makes del Sarto's use of the sheet all the more likely.

The possibility that the animals depicted in the study were copied from the fresco seems unlikely, because the pen and ink study shows the giraffe in its entirety and with a fair degree of anatomical accuracy, whereas in the fresco only half of the beast's body is visible, which suggests that the *Giornale* drawing was created before the painting.[372] That the study pre-dates the painting is further suggested by the technical approach; the profile format used in the depiction of each animal, the compositional method of showing animals in superimposed rows, and the method of rendering the shape of an animal as a strong outline to describe its contour, and the added application of a wash with brown ink to fill in the shape are all typical characteristics of fifteenth-century modelbooks.[373] That Andrea del Sarto can be ruled out as the likely author of the study can be confirmed when comparing the depicted animals in the *Giornale* sheet with del Sarto's authenticated preparatory drawings for the fresco. For example, his drawings of a dog and two monkeys are not only much livelier than the animals depicted in the *Giornale* study, but the *pentimenti* marks also

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Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi (eds.), *Immagini Anatomiche e Naturalistiche nei Disegni degli Uffizi: Secc. XVI e XVII*, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi LX, Firenze: L.S. Olschki,1984, pp.101-2; on Cardinal Leopoldo's art collection and collecting habits see Goldberg, Edward L., *Patterns in Late Medici Art Patronage*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983.

[371] The relative fluidity of the lines and the freshness of the marks suggests that this was probably an *a priori* drawing, though possibility that the ink and wash study was itself a copy of an earlier prototype cannot be excluded, nevertheless the link between this study and the del Sarto fresco seems undeniable

[372] Based on these assumptions, I suggest that the drawing was probably created sometime between 1487-1519, which is somewhat earlier than the date (mid-sixteenth century) proposed by Roberto Ciardi and Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, Ciardi, 1984, pp.101-2.

[373] On modelbook technique and layout see Scheller, Robert, W., *Exemplum: Model-book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900-1470)*, trans. by Hoyle, Michael, Amsterdam University Press, 1995, pp.38-42.

suggest that in this case the animals were probably observed from living and moving subjects (Figs. 92-93).[374]

The fact that many of the animals depicted in the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* were not studied directly from nature but were based on an existing pictorial source, brings into question the very idea that the creatures in the foreground represented inmates from Leo X's zoo.[375] Indeed, that the reliability of Vasari's listed animals in Leo X's menagerie should be questioned is suggested by the plural wording of 'elephants', which is factually incorrect. The only elephant Leo X actually possessed was the white Asian elephant that King Manuel I of Portugal sent to Rome in 1514 (see Chapter 2). Indeed the very absence of Hanno, as the beast was named, which was also the most precious among the living creatures Leo X received from the Portuguese monarch, raises doubts about Cox-Rearick's suggestion that the animals depicted in del Sarto's fresco invite a specifically 'Leonine reading of this scene'.[376] There is little doubt that the Papal menagerie did contain lions, cheetahs and civet cats, as these were relatively common, and perhaps also parrots and monkeys, since some of these species were among the gifts sent by Manuel I.[377] However, it is also highly likely that Vasari's list of animals was based not on data gathered from a personal visit to the Pontifical zoo, but on hearsay or on visual sources, such as the *Salone Grande* fresco itself.[378]

The evidence has shown that the fresco, as it was left by del Sarto in 1521, raises serious doubts that a link to Lorenzo *il Magnifico* was intended, and if it were, the signifiers were sufficiently discrete and subtle that visitors to the villa at Poggio a Caiano are unlikely

[374] Marco Masseti and Cecilia Veracini have identified the two monkeys in the actual fresco at Poggio a Caiano as an African Cape Verde monkey (*Chlorocebus sabeus*), and the one seated on the shoulder of one of the human protagonists as one of the earliest depictions in European art of a Marcgrave's capuchin monkey (*Cebus flavius*) from South America. The authors similarly note that del Sarto may have relied on living models for his depiction of the monkeys. Masseti, Marco and Cecilia Veracini, 'The first record of Marcgrave's capuchin in Europe: South American monkeys in Italy during the early sixteenth century', *Archives of Natural History*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2010), 91–101 (pp.91/95), http://www.euppublishing.com/doi/pdfplus/10.3366/E0260954109001673 [20/08/2012].
[375] Shearman, 1965, p.88.
[376] Cox-Rearick, 1984, p.108.
[377] Bedini, 2000, p.28.
[378] Vasari's comments regarding the type of animals that were represented in Leo X's Belvedere menagerie were made in relation to animals depicted by Giovanni da Udine at the Vatican Palace (for the list of animals see footnotes 35 and 368 above), Vasari, 1568,Vol. 4, p.197; Vasari 1878-1885, Vol. IV, 1889, p.362.

to have connected the scene and the classically garbed Caesar to Lorenzo (Fig. 94). This reading appears to be confirmed by del Sarto's successor, Alessandro Allori, who, some fifty years later, restored and completed what he described as the 'mezza storia sulla quale è uno imperatore presentato da diuersi e uarii presenti'.[379] Clearly at the stage when Allori took over the work, it was still described as a story in which an emperor is being presented with various gifts, and it is likely that Allori's interpretation was based on the information provided by Vasari, whose *Vite* had just been published when Allori began his interventions at the *Salone Grande*. Questions also remain regarding the idea that the animals in the foreground were meant to refer to gifts received by Leo X, which, as I have shown, were likely to have been based on an existing model rather than on the zoological inhabitants of the Papal menagerie. Given the questions that have been raised regarding traditional interpretations of del Sarto's fresco, it seems just as likely that the work, as it was left by del Sarto, represented Caesar's triumphant return from Egypt and that the animals represented the spoils of his victorious campaigns - just as Dio and Pliny had described it. What scholarly accounts of the del Sarto fresco have tended to ignore is the important factor that our assessment of the work is heavily influenced by the fact that we are looking at the fresco after the completion of Vasari's *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* and after the additions and alterations Allori made to the *Salone Grande* fresco decorations. A consideration of these contexts is crucial if we are to understand how the narrative changed after Giorgio Vasari's treatment of the giraffe, and how Allori's additions to the *Salone Grande* frescoes facilitated a reading of the animals as Medici gifts.

Vasari's fresco of *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* (1556-68) and his appropriation of Andrea del Sarto's *modello*

Vasari, as has been noted above, inherited the *modello* for the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* fresco, attributed to his former master, Andrea del Sarto. He made use of that compositional model in his creation of a work that was to become an

[379] 'Half story in which there is an emperor being presented with various gifts', Allori, Alessandro, *I Ricordi di Alessandro Allori*, ed by I. B. Supino, Firenze: Tip. Barbèra, 1908, p.28.

unambiguous endorsement of the idea that the intended recipient of the Sultan of Egypt's giraffe was Lorenzo *il Magnifico* (Figs. 5/85). In 1556, Cosimo I de' Medici placed Vasari, his supervisor of works, in charge of remodelling the Palazzo dell Signoria. Cosimo's takeover of the former Republic's seat of power represented a supreme act of confidence and was a triumph for a man who, upon his election in 1537 as head of the Florentine government, was penniless, inexperienced and had little real authority over a city that was still effectively controlled by imperial troops.[380] Twenty years later things were clearly different, and Cosimo set about re-writing his family's history in the very setting that had once symbolized the city's collective and 'democratic' ethos. Vasari's tasks included the decoration of the first-floor apartments of the renamed Palazzo Vecchio with a series of frescoes designed in a grand scheme to celebrate the glorious deeds and triumphal achievements of Duke Cosimo and his ancestors. Devised by Vincenzo Borghini (1515-1580), the complex iconographic programme was effectively designed to gloss over Florence's Republican past and to present the Medici family as the city's permanent ruling dynasty. Thus, as visitors progressed through the series of individual rooms, dedicated respectively to Cosimo *il Vecchio*, Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, Leo X, Clement II and Cosimo I, they were given the impression of a seamless lineage of Medici rulers.[381] That individual family members were presented in these absolutist terms is made clear in the central panel of the ceiling fresco in the *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico*. Entitled *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors*, the work portrayed Lorenzo as head of state and princely recipient of diplomatic favours. In what must have been a deliberate echo of Andrea del Sarto's fresco, Lorenzo's pose is almost identical to that of Caesar in the Poggio a Caiano work (Figs.94-95). This was done intentionally in order to establish iconographic links between the two works and between the two men. The main protagonist in Vasari's fresco, however, is instantly identifiable with Lorenzo, as can be confirmed by comparing his features with other portraits and with his death mask.[382]

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[380] Starn, Randolph and Loren Partridge, *Arts of Power: Three Halls of State in Italy, 1300-1600*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, p.155.

[381] The themes of dynastic continuity and the deliberate merging of the family history during the Republican era and the *Principato* are explored by Cox-Rearick, 1984.

[382] *Portrait bust of Lorenzo de' Medici*, probably after a model by Andrea del Verrocchio and Orsino Benintendi, 15th or 16th Century, painted terracotta, 65.8 x 59.1 x 32.7cm, Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection1943.4.92; Death mask of Lorenzo de Medici, plaster, life-size, 1492, Warehouse of the State Galleries, Florence.

Clad in contemporary garb, he is shown seated on a raised platform from which he surveys the ambassadors who have come to pay him homage. Among the gifts presented to Lorenzo are the familiar cast of exotic beasts: the giraffe, monkey and the parrot. Also included are a lion and a lioness, three camels and the heads of several horses. The prominence accorded to the magnificent white horse serves as another reminder that rare equine breeds were seen as 'exotic' in Vasari's day. From a letter written in 1556 by the humanist and philologist Cosimo Bartoli to his friend Vasari, and from Vasari's *Vite,* we learn that the Barbary horses and the lions were intended to signify a gift from the Arragonesi king of Naples, whereas the parrots, monkeys, camels, and a giraffe were meant to represent the various gifts 'che alla virtù e grandezza di Lorenzo portava Caiebo, Soldando del Cairo'.[383] The list of animals sent by Sultan Qā'itbāy has evidently gone up in these accounts, and the written testimony endorses what the painting portrays: Lorenzo is declared as princely beneficiary of the gifts that Sultan Qā'itbāy dispatched to Florence in 1487.

Vasari also quoted from Andrea del Sarto's fresco in his portrayal of these animals. The head and neck of the giraffe, for example, are very similar to those of the beast depicted in the *Salone Grande* fresco. It is even possible that Vasari made use of the pen and ink study from the *Giornale de Animali*: certainly the harness around the animal's head and neck seems to be tied in a near-identical way (Figs. 96-98/86). Similarly, the figure carrying a vessel with a parrot on top, and the monkey that can be seen in front of the black figure with a feathery hat, are clearly based on the del Sarto fresco. In a different context, Alessandro Nova has argued that the practice of quotation or self-quotation by means of recycling established pictorial motifs was one of the most characteristic features of mannerist art.[384] Given the vast turnover of work by Vasari it seems highly likely that the re-use use of a ready-made cartoon, preliminary drawings, and quotations from other works was seen as an expedient solution to save labour and time.[385] However, I would argue that

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[383] Bartoli's letter is cited in Joost-Gaugiger, 1987 (p.97, fn. 3); 'pappagalli, scimmie, cammelli, e...una giraffa', Vasari, 1878-1885, Vol. VIII ('I Ragionamenti a le Lettere edite e inedite di Giorgio Vasari'), 1882, p.114.

[384] Nova, Alessandro, 'Salviati, Vasari, and the Reuse of Drawings in Their Working Practice', *Master Drawings*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1992), 83-108 (p.83).

[385] On Vasari's re-use of drawings as a laboursaving device in his Sala dei Cento Giorni frescoes see also Jacobs Herman, Fredrika, 'A New Drawing by Vasari for the Sala dei Cento Giorni', *Master Drawings*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (1982), 371-374 + 420-421.

such pictorial quotations were primarily fundamental in facilitating and reinforcing the idea that the subject of the Poggio a Caiano fresco and Vasari's painting at the Palazzo Vecchio were essentially the same. Even more crucially, the quotations were instrumental for transforming the giraffe from a symbol of Eastern exoticism into a *topos* of Lorenzo. In her thought-provoking article on the relationship between art, imagery and memory, Patricia Lee Rubin has argued that fixing appearances could be used as a powerful means of conditioning memories and that this influenced the way Renaissance patrons were remembered.[386] These ideas seem particularly apt in this context, especially as the imagery concerned was exceptionally rare or unusual and therefore all the more memorable and significant. Rubin's model has helped to reveal how the deliberate cross-referencing between works, together with the carefully targeted choreographing and 'recycling' of key iconographic details, had a kind of layering effect on the memory, which helped to drive the meaning of a given pictorial narrative towards a certain conclusion. In the case of Vasari's fresco, the narrative was effectively targeted to establish the myth of Lorenzo as the intended recipient of Sultan Qā'itbāy's giraffe. This has also meant that, though a process of retrospective association with Vasari's fresco, all previously rendered giraffes in the context of Florentine art, could, in the right setting, be claimed as an allusion to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*.

Alessandro Allori's additions to the fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*, 1578-82

As we have seen, scholars have tended to read the animals portrayed in Andrea del Sarto's *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* as a classically veiled reference to animal gifts received by Lorenzo and his son, Pope Leo X. However, the evidence suggests that it was only after Vasari had painted his fresco at the Palazzo Vecchio and Alessandro Allori had completed his additions to the work begun by del Sarto, that these connections were made explicit, both visually and verbally. It was not until 1578, more than half a century after the abandonment of the decorative programme initiated by Leo X, that further work was carried out at the *Salone Grande*. The commissioner of this second phase was Francesco I, successor to Cosimo I, who had shown little interest in the Poggio a Caiano

[386] Rubin, 2000, p.82.

project. Following a programme directed by Vincenzo Borghini, Allori was charged with the task of restoring, completing and enlarging the paintings begun by del Sarto and his colleagues and to fresco the spaces that remained to be decorated.[387] Allori extended del Sarto's fresco by a third, and his additions to the right of the great archway (Fig. 4) significantly altered the composition and gave added emphasis to the animals already depicted in the foreground of the painting. The artist's contribution to the painted 'menagerie' included a majestic horse with an attendant whose pose is almost identical to the groom in Vasari's *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico* fresco (Figs. 5/99). This visual quotation is yet another example of cross-referencing between the two works, though this time in reverse. The splendid American wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), to the left of the horse, also seems to have been inspired by an existing work, since both the bird and the *putto*-like child who embraces it closely resemble similar images represented in a tapestry door-hanging designed by Agnolo Bronzino (1503-1572) and woven by Jan Rost (Figs. 99-100).[388] The fact that the turkey was represented in these two important Medici commissions points to the probability that the bird, which originated from the New World and was therefore rare and exotic, may have been sent as a gift to one of the members of the Medici family, or as Heikamp suggests, was an exemplar of the rare animals Cosimo I imported from the New World.[389] The former reading is perhaps more plausible, as the theme of animal gifts bestowed on the Medici is continued in Allori's other *Salone* frescoes. For example, his *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax* (northeast wall), was, according to Rafaello Borghini, meant as an allusion to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*'s courageous peace mission to King Ferrante of Naples in 1479 (Fig. 101).[390] Depicted in the background of the scene are two elephants; the one on the right is being led past an architectural edifice reminiscent of the *Castel Sant Angelo* in Rome (Fig. 102), whereas the one on the left is shown to be spraying water onto a crowd of onlookers (Fig.

[387] Allori, 1908, p.28; and Allori's letter to Vincenzo Borghini – Borghini, Vincenzo, *Carteggio Artistico Inedito di D. Vinc. Borghini*, ed. by Prof. Lorenzoni, Vol.1, Firenze: B. Seber, 1912, pp.126-7.
[388] The tapestry was the first such artefact to be produced in the Florentine workshop set up by Cosimo I de' Medici, Achidini Luchinat, Cristina [et al.], The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence, New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002, p.280.
[389] Heikamp, Detlef, *Mexico and the Medici*, Florence: Editrice Edam, 1972, p.11.
[390] Borghini, Raffaelo, *Il Riposo di Raffaello Borghini: In CVI della Pittura, e della Scultura si fauella, de piu illustri Pittori, e Scultori, e delle piu famose opere loro si fa mentione; e le cose principali appartenenti à dette arti s'insegnano / All'Illustriss. et Eccellentiss. Sig. Padron Suo Singulariss. il Sig. Don Giovanni Medici*, Fiorenza: Appresso Giorgio Marescotti, 1584, p.627.

103). The elephants are almost certainly a reference to Hanno, the white Asian elephant that was led into Rome on 19 March 1514. Eyewitness accounts report that the gentle beast was trained to dance to pipe music and, on command of its trainer, to blow water from its trunk over the crowd; an act of 'pachydermal' mischief-making, which is said to have greatly amused Leo X when the animal was introduced to him.[391] The fact that the central figure amid the group of spectators looking down from the platform appears to be clad in papal garb, makes it even more likely that Allori's depicted elephants are meant to be read as an allusion to Manuel I's gift. Allori's additions to del'Sarto's fresco and the frescoes he later designed himself, effectively change the emphasis of the Caesar story. This has meant that the painted animals in the *Salone Grande* scheme as a whole assume a much greater significance, which has helped to reinforce the message that the Medici, from Lorenzo *il Magnifico* onwards, had been honoured with exotic animal gifts. Indeed, Allori's alterations to del Sarto's fresco, especially his references to the well-documented beasts received by Leo X, were essential in allowing a connection to be made between Caesar and Lorenzo, and this affected the way in which the work was described subsequently. For it was only after Vasari had painted his fresco in the Palazzo Vecchio and two years after the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* was completed by Allori, that a parallel between the Roman general Julius Caesar and Lorenzo *il Magnifico* was articulated unequivocally. This occurred in Raffaello Borghini's *Il Riposto* (1584), in which the author described the work as a

> historia dove si vede Cesare in Egitto... significare quando il magnifico Lorenzo Medici il vecchio fu di vari, stranieri animali presentato.[392]

Conclusion

From the giraffe's arrival in Florence in 1487, commentators were divided among those who claimed that the beast, along with other exotic animals, was given to the Florentine people and those who named their leading citizen, Lorenzo de' Medici, as the man to whom the special favours were made. There is strong evidence that the latter was not the case, and that the animals sent by Sultan Qā'itbāy of Egypt were instead given to the *Signoria*, and to

[391] Bedini, 2000, pp.44/52.
[392] 'History which shows Caesar in Egypt ... signifies the time when the magnificent Lorenzo de' Medici the older was presented with various, strange animals', Borghini, 1584, p.626.

the Florentine people, as an incentive to develop trade. Historians have been pursuaded to accept the former version as the truth. It is evident, however, that this way of thinking is the result of effective stage-managed Medici propaganda, in which the Medici patrons, their supporters, as well as contemporary chroniclers and the artists and humanist advisors the Medici engaged, collaborated in choreographing the family's history for a posthumous audience. In the endeavour to unravel the myth of Lorenzo's giraffe, which in pictorial terms took almost a century to construct, I have shown that subtle manipulation of the animal iconography and cross-referencing between works has allowed for the narrative to be gradually changed, following from Vasari's unambiguous endorsement of Lorenzo as recipient of the famous beast. Thus, while the three *Adoration of the Magi* scenes and other works of art created prior to the Medici's officially sanctioned reign may have laid the foundations for representing the subject of the giraffe, its signification in these works is open to speculation, and it is probably only because of the Medici's strong identification with the *Magi* theme that has prompted some historians to link the animal to Lorenzo. In the secular context of the *Salone Grande* at Poggio a Caiano, and set within a theme from ancient Roman history, the giraffe assumed a different narrative role. However, the evidence has shown that whilst the theme of del Sarto's fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* may have lent itself to the idea of an intended parallel between Caesar and Lorenzo, neither Vasari's nor Allori's descriptions of the work made reference to such a connection. It was only after Vasari had painted his fresco at the Palazzo Vecchio, which gave shape to the myth that the giraffe was given to Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, and following Allori's additions to the *Salone Grande* fresco decorations that made it possible to read the animal as a '*topos* for Lorenzo'.

The common denominator that unites the Medici-commissioned works considered here is that they all reinforce the idea that animal imagery was seen as essential in signifying courtly status. In Gozzoli's fresco, wild and exotic beasts reflected the Medici's ambitions to share in the cultural rituals of the northern Italian courts, such as hunting. In the frescos painted by del Sarto, Vasari and Allori, the emphasis is on the prestige the Medici family attached to the possession of rare and exotic animals and their importance in the diplomacy of gift exchange. We have already witnessed that Cosimo I used animal gifts

as a way of bolstering his international standing and reputation; clearly just as much prestige was attached to receiving animals as to giving them. The episode of the giraffe demonstrates the power and honour the gift of a rare beast conferred on the person receiving such tributes, which is why members of the later branch of the Medici family were so eager to make their case for Lorenzo as recipient of the famous giraffe. In the pictorial construction of the myth, mimetic verisimilitude clearly was not a priority; on the contrary, the practice of recycling established prototypes was evidently seen as a more effective means of constructing a powerful and lasting image of Lorenzo as the first in a line of Medici successors to be honoured with exotic animal gifts. In this way, the giraffe and other exotic beasts served several important functions: they advertised the Medici's early princely ambition; they proclaimed the Medici's rising political status and wealth in being able to procure such luxury goods, and they reminded the onlooker of the diplomatic ties that bound the Medici to other powerful individuals in Europe and beyond. Equally significant was their role in establishing connections across time and space and between the two branches of the family to create the impression of a seamless transfer of power from the first-generation descendents of Cosimo di Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici to the officially sanctioned Medici rulers who stemmed from Lorenzo di Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici (see Genealogical table, p.ix). Such a narrative effectively merged the two phases of the city's political history: the Republican era and the *Principato* - with family representatives from both sides of the chronological and political spectrum evidently being cast as beneficiaries of international favours in the form of animal tributes. In their politicized role, animals in both the fresco at Poggio a Caiano and the one at the Palazzo Vecchio played a key role in reinforcing ideas about power, dynasty, and political legitimacy, and in advertising the Medici's ambitions to be recognized as a genuine court.[393]

[393] The idea that the Medici used imagery to signify aspects of dynasty was first proposed by Cox-Rearick, 1984.

CHAPTER 4

The role of Jacopo Ligozzi's zoological illustrations in the Medici's patronage of science and art: tensions between scientific naturalism and decorative naturalism

Introduction

In the study of three frescoes commissioned by different members of the Medici family, it was argued that the Medici used images of wild and exotic beasts to promote ideas about their courtly aspiration and to emphasise their status as rulers by presenting themselves as recipients of diplomatic favours. Animal imagery, in the work of Gozzoli, del Sarto, Vasari and Allori, has thus been shown to have served as a powerful tool in conditioning memory and in influencing the way the family and its history was judged by contemporary society and posterity. This chapter examines the role of zoological illustration in the Medici's sponsorship of a natural science project and in the Grand-ducal manufacture of *pietra dura* (hardstone) artefacts. These two very different contexts will be explored by examining the contrasting and to some extent contradictory ways in which Jacopo Ligozzi's (ca.1550-1627) particular skills as naturalist painter were exploited by the next-generation Medici rulers to establish their reputation as patrons of the sciences and the arts in a wider international arena.

The chapter is divided into two main parts: Part I examines Ligozzi's role as scientific draftsman to Francesco I, and the latter's sponsorship of the Bolognese naturalist Ulisse Aldovandi's (1522-1605) multi-volume *Natural History*. Part II considers the later deployment of Ligozzi's zoological paintings in the development of the new-look *pietra dura* artefacts produced by the Grand-ducal workshops. Francesco I's evident fascination with unusual fauna and flora has already been noted in earlier chapters, and these collecting interests combined with his scholarly disposition are also in evidence here - both in his hiring of Ligozzi and in his patronage of Aldrovandi's classification project. I will argue that in availing himself of the services of an artist trained in the northern traditions of naturalist painting, and in taking an active role in the promotion of learned research into the natural sciences and zoology, the Grand Duke was able to compete directly and meaningfully with other courts.

Ligozzi's particular skills in zoological and botanical illustrations were ideally suited to the task of creating pictorial records of the specimens of fauna and flora in the Medici's collections. The resulting images were probably initially intended primarily for the Grand Duke's private enjoyment; however, they soon assumed a wider application and a larger audience because they were adapted to different contexts. In their role as visual templates for the creation of the woodcut prints used in Ulisse Aldrovandi's multi-volume *Natural History* their purpose was to promote learning and education about the world's fauna and flora and to disseminate this knowledge to a wider scholarly and courtly audience. In their subsequent use as models for the new-look *pietra dura* artefacts, produced at the Grand-ducal workshops, Ligozzi's images of birds and flowers were being 'translated' and crafted into desirable objects made from precious exotic materials to be sold to connoisseurial European clients. Both these projects demonstrate a more confident and outward looking court, whose ambition was expressed in enterprises that were designed to enhance the Medici's reputation as princely benefactors of key scientific research projects and as patrons of state-run industries that would promote Florence as a centre of artistic excellence and innovation.

In their original conception, Ligozzi's zoological illustrations represent a commitment and dedication to preserve and portray the integrity of the real thing, and the mimetic verisimilitude he brought to the depiction of animals and plants set new standards in the genre of zoological and botanical illustrations. Yet the adaptation of Ligozzi's zoological illustrations to different media and contexts also highlights the diversity of their application and the idea that the images could be meaningful in different ways. Crucially, this raises fascinating tension between the purely 'scientific' and decorative naturalism, which by implication undermines the strict distinctions and demarcations that are traditionally made between scientific zoological illustration and art. Furthermore, the 'translating' process itself raises a number of issues that are often sidestepped or ignored in the available accounts of his work. For example, the continued practice of copying and adapting designs to another medium prompts uncomfortable questions regarding authorship, the loss of integrity of the original designs, and the authenticity of nature studies that are supposedly based on the real thing.

Part I: Francesco I de' Medici's patronage of Ulisse Aldrovandi's *Natural History* and Ligozzi's role as scientific draftsman to the Grand-ducal court

Ligozzi's employment at Francesco I de' Medici's court

The state and political office which Francesco I inherited on his accession to the Grand Dukedom in 1574 was rather different from the one his father encountered when he became the second Duke of Florence. From his 'humble' beginnings as 'capo e primario del governo della città e del domino', Cosimo I de' Medici, by means of shrewd political manoeuvring had managed to turn the former Republic from a city controlled by imperial forces into an independent state.[394] His sovereignty was reinforced further when he was awarded the title of Grand Duke from Pope Pius V in December 1569; the point marked the beginning of the Medici's rule over a territory that came to be known the Duchy of Tuscany. In addition to these political achievements, his own marriage and especially the nuptial alliance between his son, Francesco I, and the Habsburg princess, Joanna of Austria, bound the house of the Medici to the most powerful secular court in Europe.[395] Given this position, Francesco I perhaps felt himself to be at greater liberty to commission works that reflected his personal interests than his predecessor, whose artistic legacy - as has been shown - was primarily focused on establishing the Medici's political position and dynastic credentials. Yet these familial connections and elevated social and political status also brought Francesco I into a relationship of competition with other rulers. Thus, the need to prove himself in the wider arena of world politics, the arts and the sciences, as well as self-fulfilment, probably explain why the new sovereign, who is said to have dedicated his life to 'investigating [the] various secrets of nature', was so eager to enlarge and diversify the Grand-ducal collection of fauna and flora. This also explains why Jacopo Ligozzi's specific artistic skills as illustrator of animals and plants found particular favour at Francesco's court and why the Grand Duke was willing to support one of the most important research projects in early modern natural philosophy: Ulisse Aldrovandi's twelve-volume *Natural*

[394] Fasano Guarini quoted in Van Veen, 2006, p.1.
[395] Van Veen, 2006, pp.2/4.

History.[396]

At this stage, it is worth considering briefly Ligozzi's background and the nature of his particular artistic specialism, to explain why a seemingly little-known painter from Verona was invited to the Florentine Court. Jacopo Ligozzi was born in Verona into a large family of artists and artisans.[397] He began his training in the family workshop, and, according to the Florentine biographer and historian, Filippo Baldinucci (1624-1697), he also spent some time at the workshop of the painter Paolo Veronese (1528-1588).[398] Ligozzi was approaching his thirties when in 1577 (or possibly in 1576) he was hired by Francesco I to record the rarities in the Medici's zoological and botanical collections - a task which he carried out until the death of Grand Duke Francesco I in 1587.[399] There is little firm evidence on Ligozzi's career prior to his taking up his post in Florence, nor is it known where he developed his special aptitude for naturalist painting, though this appears to have been somewhat of a family specialism. Several members of his family are known to have contributed to the Grand-ducal collection of zoological and botanical paintings and/or

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[396] Ulisse Aldrovandi cited in Findlen, Paula, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996, p.223; Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Natural History*, 12 Volumes, Bologna, 1599 -1667; Aldrovandi only published four volumes during his own lifetime: *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historiae* libri XII (Bologna, 1599-1603), 3 Vols., and *De animalibus insectis libri septum* (Bologna, 1602). Johann Cornelius Uterwer edited *Aldrovandi's Depiscibus libri V. et de cetis lib[rus] unus* (Bologna, 1612), *De quadrupedibus solidipedibus volumen integrum* (Bologna, 1616), and, with T. Dempster, *Quadrupedum omnium bisulcorum historia* (Bologna, 1621). Bartolomeo Ambrosini edited *De quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis libri tres, et de quadrupedibus digitatis ovipars libri duo* (Bologna, 1637), *Serpentium et draconum historiae libri duo* (Bologna, 1639), *Monstrorum historia, cum parallipomenis historiae omnium animalium* (Bologna, 1642), and *Musaeum metallicum in libros IIII. distributum* (Bologna, 1648). Montalbani and Legati edited the last published work of Aldrovandi, *Dendrologiae naturalis scilicet arborum historiae libri duo* (Bologna, 1667); information taken from Findlen, Paula, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996, p.25, fn.26

[397] Jacopo's father Giovanni Ermanno Ligozzi (fl.1572-88;d. before 1605) was a painter, as was Jacopo's brother, Francesco (d. before 1635) and his cousin Francesco di Mercurio di Ligozzi (?), Thieme, Ulrich and Felix Becker (eds), this volume edited by Hans Vollmer, *Allgemeines Lexikon bildenden Kunstler*., 37 Vols, Vol.23 'Leitenstorfer-Mander', Leipzig : Seemann, 1929, pp.220-2.

[398] '[Il] diligente pittore Jacopo Ligozzi stato discepolo di Paolo Veronese'; 'Jacopo Ligozzi, buonissimo pittore, stato discepolo del tanto celebre Paolo Veronese'; Baldinucci, Filippo, *Notizie dei professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua : per le quali si dimostra come, e per chi le belle arti di pittura, scultura e architettura, lasciata la rozzezza delle maniere greca e gotica, si siano in questi secoli ridotte all' antica loro perfezione : opera distinta in secoli e decennali di Filippo Baldinucci*, 7Vols, Firenze: S.P.E.S., 1974-1975, Vol. 3, p.220; Vol. 4, p.586.

[399] Archival sources offer conflicting evidence regarding the exact date of Ligozzi's arrival in Florence. However, scholars seem to agree that Ligozzi begun working for Francesco I de' Medici in the early part of 1577, on this see Conigliello, Lucilla, 'Alcune note su Jacopo Ligozzi e sui dipinti del 1594', *Paragone*, No. 485 (1990), 21-42, (pp.36-7, fn.9).

to have produced studies of animals and plants for the albums collated by Aldrovandi.[400] Lucilla Conigliello's observation that Jacopo Ligozzi, along with other family members, worked within a context that 'reflected the lavish taste of the imperial courts of Austria and the court in Trent', together with a recent discovery of two parchment manuscript books containing illustrations of fish and birds, entitled 'Des Jacopo Ligozi meervischbuch uff pergamen' (Figs. 104a-b) and 'Des Jacopo Ligozi ....vogelbuch', in the inventory of Emperor Rudolf II's *Kunstkammer*, has prompted the speculations that the artist may have worked at the Hapsburg court in Vienna shortly before taking up his post at the Florentine court. [401] This cannot be verified conclusively, nor can it be confirmed positively that Ligozzi's 'meervischbuch' and 'vogelbuch' were indeed commissioned by the Imperial Court in Vienna and that they did not enter the Habsburg collection by some other means. However, a legal document in the Archivio di Stato di Verona confirms that members of the Ligozzi family had worked for the Imperial Court, that Ligozzi had visited his uncle, also named Jacopo, at his home in Baden (some 20 miles from Vienna) and had been tutor to his son.[402] The Habsburg Court employed several Italian practitioners who specialised in botanical and zoological painting, including Giorgio Liberale from Udine (1527-1579),

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[400] This included his brother, Francesco, who was based in the Veneto, but is recorded to have sent works to Aldrovandi, and his cousin, Francesco di Mercurio, who also worked for the Medici in Florence between1590-1591, and produced works for Aldrovandi. Jacopo's son, also called Francesco (active Florence, 1585; d.1641), and Francesco di Mercurio's son, Bartolomeo, later undertook commissions for the Medici, see Olmi, Giuseppe, *L'inventario del mondo : Catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna*, Bologna : Società editrice il Mulino, 1992, pp.83-85; Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'L'Immagine Naturalistica a Firenze tra XVI e XVII Secolo: Contributo al Rapporto "Arte-Natura" tra Manierismo e Prima Età Barocca', in *Immagini Anatomiche e Naturalistiche nei Disegni degli Uffizi: Secc. XVI e XVII*, ed. by Roberto P. Ciardi e Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, Gabinetto disegni e stampe degli Uffizi LX, Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 1984, pp.37-67, (pp.53-5, fns.61-62); Casciu, 2009, pp.232-45.

[401] Conigliello, 2005, pp.6/15; the Ligozzi family workshop in Verona specialized in silk embroidery, tapestry designs and armoury, as well as religious works, judging by the earliest of Jacopo's signed works for the churches of Sant'Antonio at Bivedo (*Saint Anne with the Madonna and Saints* 1566) and the panelled altar for San Silvestro at Vigo Lomaso (1567), both in Trent, see Bacci, Mina, 'Jacopo Ligozzi', in *Il Seicento fiorentino: arte a Firenze da Ferdinando I a Cosimo III*, (exhib. cat.), 3 Vols, Firenze : Cantini, 1986, Vol. 3: Biografie, pp.104-107, p.104; on Ligozzi's connection with the Habsburg court see Conigliello Lucilla, 'Pesci Crostacei e un'iguana per l'imperatore Rudolfo II', *Paragone* Nos. 493-495 (1991), 22-29; on Ligozzi's 'meervischbuch' and 'vogelbuch' see also: Item 2693 'Des Jacopo Ligozi meervischbuch uff pergamen, von wasserfarbengrund, ist gross, in rott leder mit silbern abgebrochnen clausurn gebunden [...]; Item 2696 'Des Jacopo Ligozi von miniatur auf pergamen gemalt vogelbuch in kleinregal, in rot leder gebunden, hatt auch silbern abgebrochne clausurn', Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften und Inkunabelsammlung, Cod. Min., 83 and 131, cited in Bauer, Rotraut, and Herbert Haupt. 'Das Kunstkammerinventar Kaiser Rudolfs II, 1607-1611', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, Vol. 72 (1976), p.135; and especially Weiler, Christina (ed.), *Von Fischen, Vögeln und Reptilien: Meisterwerke aus den kaiserlichen Sammlungen*, (exhib. cat.), Wien: Verlag Kremayr & Scheriau KG, 2011.

[402] Conigliello, 1991, (pp.24/28, fn.7).

who was a master of natural science illustration and produced illustrated anthologies of fish and birds for Archduke Ferdinand II.[403] Lee Hendrix observes that that Ligozzi's technical approach was close to that of Giorgio Liberale, and a comparison between Ligozzi's 'meervischbuch' illustrations and images of fish and crustaceans by Liberale seems to confirm this (Figs. 104a/b-105a/b).[404] The Milanese painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526-1593) also spent most of his career as court painter to three successive Habsburg Emperors (from 1562 until 1587), and he likewise produced many nature studies, not just for his famous allegorical portraits, but also as contributions to Aldrovandi's collection of zoological and botanical paintings.[405] Again, a direct comparison between these and Ligozzi's animal paintings reveals a fairly close generic resemblance (Figs. 106-108). Jacopo Ligozzi's naturalist paintings, in formal terms, can thus be located within the representational traditions of northern Italy and also within the visual culture of the Habsburg Court, which would support the idea that Ligozzi may have worked in that cultural environment shortly before arriving in Florence. This would certainly offer a way of explaining how Ligozzi acquired his highly developed skills in zoological and botanical illustrating. Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi's proposition that Francesco's wife, Joanna of Austria, may have been instrumental in securing Ligozzi's appointment at the Florentine Grand-ducal Court sounds very plausible, especially since Joanna must have been as eager as her husband to equal in Florence the culture of the court of her brother, Maximilian II.[406] To obtain the services of an artist who had worked in that milieu, or was capable of emulating the naturalist arts practiced there, would allow the Florentine Court to compete with its Viennese counterpart, and this might account for the fairly elevated position Ligozzi evidently enjoyed during his service for Francesco I. The artist was not only made a permanent member of the court staff, but he was also provided with spacious lodgings

[403] Schütz, Karl, 'Art and Culture at the Court of Emperor Maximilian II', in *Arcimboldo 1526-1593*, ed. by Ferino-Pagden, Sylvia, Milano: Skira, 2007, pp.77-79 (p.75).
[404] Hendrix, Lee, 'Natural History Illustration at the Court of Rudolf II, in *Rudolf II and Prague: The Court and the City*, ed. by Eliška Fučíková [et al], Thames & London: Thames & Hudson, 1997, pp.157-171 (p.167), Lucilla Conigliello makes the same connection, Conigliello, 1991 (p.24).
[405] On Arcimboldo's contribution to Aldrovandi's collection of natural history studies, see Staudinger, Manfred, 'Arcimboldo and Ulisse Aldrovandi, in *Arcimboldo 1526-1593*, ed. by Ferino-Pagden, Sylvia, Milano: Skira, 2007, pp.113-7; see also Ch.5-6 and Appendix 3, in Da Costa Kaufmann, Thomas, *Arcimboldo: Visual Jokes, Natural History and Still-Life Painting*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009, pp.115-166 and 226-31.
[406] Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.38.

nearby his studio in the *Casino di San Marco*, where he and his family lived from 1578 to 1582.[407]

During his ten-year career as naturalist painter to Francesco I, Jacopo Ligozzi produced some 129 sheets of paintings of indigenous and exotic species of fauna and flora, which are now preserved in the collections of the Ufizzi's Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe.[408] Many more designs were destined for Ulisse Aldrovandi's compilation of seven volumes of 'Tavole degli animali' [Designs of Animals], which today are preserved in the *Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi* at the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna.[409] It is this rich body of works that provided the source material for the subjects of the woodcut prints in Aldrovandi's *Natural History* and later, under Ferdinando I and Cosimo II, to locally-manufactured decorative objects made from *pietra dura*. Before proceeding to a more expansive consideration of the Grand-ducal patronage in these two very different areas of cultural activity and the 'translation' of Ligozzi's works to these contexts and media, it is important to consider the formal qualities that allowed Ligozzi's zoological illustrations to be used as models.

There is little doubt that the illustrations of exotic as well as native species of birds, mammals, reptiles and fish, which the artist produced during the decade of his employment as court painter to Francesco I, are exceptional in their technical sophistication and in the microscopic precision of their observation. This is characterised, for example, in the naturalistic colouring and precise articulation with which Ligozzi depicted the plumage of a South American blue and gold macaw (Fig. 109), in the delicacy with which he depicted the anatomy of a five-toed jerboa from eastern Asia Minor (Figs. 110 a-c), in the elegant twisting rhythms of a pair of intertwined vipers (Fig. 111), in the magical iridescence of his depiction of a priest-fish's scales (Fig. 112), and in the superb illusionism with which he

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[407] The link to the work of Giorgio Liberale da Udine is suggested by Conigliello, 1990 (p.23).
[408] The '*corpus ligozziano*' contains some 146 sheets of zoological and botanical paintings, however, of these only 129 are attributed to Jacopo, the rest are attributed to his cousin, Francesco di Mercurio, Tongiorgi Tomasi, 1984, p.54; Mina,'Laudabili imitazion: la prima enciclopedia', *KOS*, Vol.19, Anno II, (1985/86), 43-66 (p.46); Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU) Uffizi, 'corpus ligozziano', 1876 Orn.-2136Orn.
[409] Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), *Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi*, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols.

painted the subtle hues of the rock ptarmigan's dense and white plumage, which the bird needs to protect it against the cold climate of its Icelandic habitat (Fig. 113). Despite this evidence of careful observation, Ligozzi's zoological paintings also retain a strong connection with the pictorial traditions of northern Italian modelbooks, produced by practitioners, such as Giovannino de' Grassi, Antonio Pisanello and others, who, as we noted earlier, were among the first Italian artists to pioneer a more naturalistic form of portraying the animals they observed in the zoological collections of their princely patrons. In these early modelbook drawings, the formal approach was to depict the bird or mammal as an isolated subject, in a fixed (or frozen) pose and in a straightforward profile view; the emphasis was therefore less on the portrayal of movement and more on the careful depiction of the animal's surface appearance (e.g.Figs. 69/72/74-76).[410] The next generation of northern Italian artists, such as Giorgio Liberale, Giuseppe Arcimboldo and Ligozzi, evidently inherited the northern specialism in zoological and botanical painting, and, while retaining some elements of the formal pictorial 'language' used by their forbearers, they also evolved the modelbook exempla into a new genre, the 'nature study', by portraying individual animals on a much larger scale and to a higher degree of finish than the earlier artists (Figs. 104a/b-105a/b).[411] That Ligozzi arose from the same pictorial traditions can be observed when comparing the study of a wild boar, created by his native predecessor from Verona, Pisanello, with Ligozzi's portrayal of a New-World collared peccary, created over a century later (Figs. 114-115). Ligozzi only seldom deviated from the format of depicting his subjects in profile and in suspended animation format; his portrayal of an American agouti, which is shown in three-quarter view, is a rare exception (Fig. 116). This formal approach, while connecting with much older pictorial traditions, was ideally suited for the purposes of 'translating' the images to other contexts and media.

Ligozzi's preoccupation with the surface appearance of the creatures he portrayed was another characteristic he shared with his predecessors; yet it was the technical brilliance he brought to the 'filling in' of that basic contour outline shape that marks the transition from modelbook schema to the scientific natural history illustration. This was

[410] Scheller, 1995, pp.41-2.
[411] Albert Elen has defined the animal drawings that emerged after the decline of the modelbook as 'nature studies', Elen, 1995, p.70.

largely determined by differences in scale and function between the two visual contexts. In modelbooks, animals were typically depicted on a very small scale and several species were often portrayed in superimposed rows on the same page (Figs. 72-75). These formal characteristics emphasize the functional nature of modelbook drawings as a valuable storehouse of ideas and visual templates for the production of more finished works.[412] Ligozzi's zoological illustrations, in contrast, were conceived on a much larger scale, and his animals were mostly depicted individually (especially the rarer species) on a single sheet of paper and devoid of any background details. The larger format has meant that the zoological subjects in Ligozzi's illustrations needed to be depicted in much greater detail and the paintings had to be executed to a more highly finished standard. This approach underlined the scientific purpose of his pictures, which was to provide an accurate and life-like visual record of a particular zoological species. To achieve this objective, Ligozzi evolved sophisticated techniques of superimposed glazes of paint and delicate layers of brushwork to depict the intricate textures, and the density and volume of fur, plumage, scales etc. (Figs. 117a-d).[413] He was also more expert at handling perspective and foreshortening than the generation of artists Pisanello belonged to, as shown in the contrasting treatment of the New and Old World pigs. Even when several species were represented on one sheet, a format he used mostly with indigenous species, the artist was meticulous in his approach and took careful account of the relationships of scale between the depicted animals (Fig. 118). This is another indication of the scientific ethos that underpinned his zoological illustrations. Careful attention to the reflection of light and shade on diverse surfaces, such as the speck of light caught in the animal's eye or the shimmering effects of refracted light across the body of a scaly fish, are part of the artist's distinctive plastic modelling, which imbued his painted creatures with a sense of animated 'existence'. The naturalistic colouring of Ligozzi's zoological studies is a particular aspect that distinguishes his work from that of others, as can be seen in the contrast between his depiction of a blue and gold macaw and a painting of the same subject by another painter in Aldrovandi's collection (Figs. 109/119). As has been noted, Ligozzi may have spent some time of his training in the workshop of Paolo Veronese, who was known as a master of

[412] Chapman, Hugo and Marzia Faietti, *Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings*, (exhib. cat.), London: The British Museum Press, 2010, p.21.
[413] On Ligozzi's technique see Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.40.

colour, and it is possible that Ligozzi learned from him how to choose and mix pigments to portray the complex hues and tonal gradations of his depicted animal protagonists.[414] Colour, in early modern zoological illustrations, clearly played as crucial a role in the creation of reliable visual data about a given species, as did the precise and meticulous pictorial articulation of the animal's anatomy and surface appearance, especially so when the animal depicted was rare and unfamiliar to its audience, as in the case of the macaw from South America (Fig. 109), but also with less common types of European species (Figs. 120a-d). Ligozzi clearly had the necessary talent and skills to fulfil the task to visually record the zoological curiosities in Francesco I de' Medici's animal collection. Moreover, the formal qualities of his zoological illustrations, defined by the clarity of their outline shape, the precise articulation of surface details, and accurate colouration, were ideally suited to their subsequent adaptation to print and hardstone.

Francesco I de' Medici's patronage of Ulisse Aldrovandi's cataloguing venture

It is likely that the initial motivation for Ligozzi's paintings of the fauna and flora was a ambition on the part of Francesco I to create a permanent visual catalogue of the botanical and zoological specimens represented in the Medici's menagerie, aviaries and botanical gardens, and that the collection of zoological and botanical studies was intended as a pictorial counterpart to the living things. The uniformity of the pictures and the fact that the species were represented on paper as isolated subjects on a neutral background underlines their function as objects to be visually examined and studied at close range. As such, they may have been exhibited alongside stuffed specimens and other natural curiosities. The recently completed *Casino di San Marco* (1574), where Ligozzi had his studio and where he created his studies of animals and plants, was a likely setting for the display of his naturalist paintings, since the building also accommodated the Grand Duke's *fonderia* (alchemical laboratories) and several rooms dedicated to Francesco I's growing

[414] On Ligozzi's association with the Veronese workshop see, fn. 391 in this study. John Gage notes that the skills of the Venetian painters lay in the handling and mixing of the available pigments, Gage, John, *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1995 (1st Paperback edition), p.137.

collection of *artificialia* (manmade objects) and *naturalia* (natural specimens).[415] Conveniently located near the *Serraglio delle fiere* and the *Giardino dei Semplici* (see Chapter 1), the *Casino* was clearly the nerve-centre of Francesco's intellectual, artistic and scientific collecting interests, and it was therefore a place that the Grand Duke was keen to show to important guests. One such distinguished visitor was Ulisse Aldrovandi (Fig. 121), the famous botanist and professor of natural philosophy at the University of Bologna, who visited Florence in June 1577, and recalls spending the first day of his two-day stay observing 'tutte le cose recondite del Casino,... le pitture dipinti al vivo dal sig. Jacomo Ligozzi, [et] ... le cose naturali'.[416] Aldrovandi's encounter with Ligozzi's work was to prove pivotal for Ligozzi's reputation as a painter of natural subjects, for the naturalist was sufficiently impressed with the artist's work to ask the Grand Duke to grant him the use of his court painter in the production of zoological and botanical illustrations for his proposed multi-volume *Natural History*. This marked the beginning of a fruitful triangular partnership between the Grand Duke as patron of the natural sciences, the naturalist Aldrovandi from Bologna, who had dedicated his life to the systematic study and cataloguing of all known species of fauna and flora, and Ligozzi, who made a substantial contribution to the eighteen manuscript books containing some 8,000 pictures painted in tempera or watercolour of animals, insects, fish, crustaceans, plants, flowers and other organic forms, which Aldrovandi, over a period of some forty years, had collected for his encyclopaedic work on nature.[417]

Patronage in the wider spheres of the arts and sciences was an effective means by which a relatively new regime, such as the Medici, could assert its political, cultural and intellectual position among the leading powerhouses of Europe. Francesco I must have realized that the reputation and cultural visibility of the Florentine court depended upon his readiness and ability to sponsor a scientific research project that would enhance and expand

[415] Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia,'The study of the natural sciences and botanical and zoological illustration in Tuscany under the Medicis from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries', *Archives of Natural History,* Vol. 28, No.2 (2001), 179-193 (p.182).
[416] 'All the things hidden away in the Casino, ...the pictures painted from life by signor Jacomo Ligozzi, [and] natural things', Frati, Ludovico, 'La vita di Ulisse Aldrovandi scritta da lui medesimo', in *Intorno alla Vita e alle Opere di Ulisse Aldrovandi: Studi di A. Baldacci -E. de Toni - L. Frati – A. Ghigi - M. Gortani - F. Morini - A. C. Ridolfi - A. Sorbelli*, Bologna: L. Beltrami, 1907, pp.1-29/25.
[417] Aldrovandi quoted in Olmi, 1992, p.54, fn.113; the manuscripts are now preserved in the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna for the digital images see http://www.filosofia.unibo.it/aldrovandi/.

human understanding about the natural world. Indeed, in offering his support to Aldrovandi's ambitious enterprise, the Grand Duke was in good company, for the list of patrons whose names can be linked to the project is long and illustrious and included among others Pope Clement VIII, the Habsburg Emperor Rudolf II, cardinals and numerous Italian princes, such as Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara and Modena, Francesco Maria II della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, Vincenzo I Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua as well as the Dukes of Parma and Piacenza.[418] Evidence indicates that some of these patrons also shared pictures of animals with the scientist. The image of a blue-headed quail-dove in Ulisse Aldrovandi's *Ornithologiae tomus alter* (1600), for example, was based on a picture painted by Rudolf II's court painter Arcimboldo, and was one of a number of animal studies that were sent to Aldrovandi by the Imperial Court in Prague, between 1583-1585 (Figs. 122-123).[419] Francesco I's involvement in Aldrovandi's venture underlined his Grand-ducal status and no doubt helped to place the Florentine Court on a par with others; one wonders, therefore, if Aldrovandi's Florentine visit was arranged with that purpose in mind. The Grand Duke's most important contribution lay in making the princely collection of botanical and zoological specimens available for scientific study, and in his autobiography Aldrovandi pays tribute to Francesco I, who evidently

> promettendogli [Aldrovandi] per l'avvenire che di tutte Ie cose che gli capiterebbero alle mani peregrine gliene farebbe parte, e ogni volta che n'avesse due gliene darebbe una; siccome sempre ha fatto da quel tempo in poi, avendogli mandato piante, semi, metalli, uccelli dipinti al vivo, et altre cose. [420]

The letters the two men wrote to each other offer a fascinating insight into the spirit of generosity that underpinned their relationship, with both patron and naturalist evidently willing to share and exchange natural curiosities with each other. On occasion, this even included living creatures, as in the case of two Libyan vipers that the Grand Duke

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[418] Findlen, Paula, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996, pp.363-4*;* on the Gonzaga court see Franchini, Dario A. (et al), *La Scienza a Corte: Collezionismo Eclettico, Natura e Immagine a Mantova fra Rinascimento e Manierismo*, Roma : Bulzoni, 1979 (particularly pp.122-26).

[419] For other examples, see Appendix 3, in Da Costa Kaufmann, Thomas, *Arcimboldo: Visual Jokes, Natural History and Still-Life Painting*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009, pp. 226-31.

[420] '[Francesco I] promised to give him [Aldrovandi] a share of everything that fell into his hands from foreign parts and of each thing he had two he would give him one, as indeed he had done by sending him plants, seeds, metals and birds depicted live and other things.', Aldrovandi in Frati,1907, pp.1-29/26.

dispatched to Bologna, which was a treatment that these delicate exotic creatures evidently did not survive in good condition, as indicated in one of Aldrovandi's letters.[421]

Aldrovandi had evidently intended for his in-house illustrator, Giovanni de' Neri, to create a painting of the reptiles to add to his collection of paintings.[422] However, one of the two reptiles died before de' Neri had a chance to depict them both in their living state. To have them recorded from life was clearly important to Aldrovandi, hence his request to Francesco I for the painting Ligozzi had made of the snakes prior to their shipment to Bologna (Fig. 111). From this we can deduce that Francesco I's collection was made available to Aldrovandi in two forms: living specimens of animals and plants would be dispatched were possible, and when this was not achievable, a pictorial representation created by Ligozzi would be sent instead. Aldrovandi likewise sent plants and illustrations of unusual flora and fauna to Francesco I. A letter dated 8 September 1578, for example, makes reference to 'sei figure, cioè quattro d'animali et due di piante peregrine; depinte al vivo dal mio pittore', the naturalist had sent to his Grand-ducal patron in Florence. In addition, Aldrovandi offered to have copies made for Francesco I, of paintings he had received from a Polish source, which depicted an 'Uro' (bear?), a 'Turo' (a bison?) and an 'Alce' (elk).[423] The offer may have been meant as a 'sweetener', to persuade the Grand Duke finally to let him have the picture of the two vipers he asked for the previous year.[424] As we will discover below, Aldrovandi was to wait another two years before he finally received a copy of the painted serpents. This suggests that the naturalist's requests were not always fulfilled by Francesco I, or that the Grand Duke may have been reluctant to part with the picture Ligozzi had painted of the two serpents. Nevertheless, it is clear that the exchange of natural curiosities and of images provided a vital means of sharing information about species of animals and plants from diverse countries, and collectors evidently set up their own databases of real and/or depicted zoological and botanical specimens. The two

[421] 'Desideraria un favor singolare da Vostra Altezza: la pittura di quei doi serpenti, cioè del Ceraste et Ammodite che mi donò vivi, perchè non havendo potuto haver il mio Pittore, non li ho potuto far dipingere; et uno di quelli è morto', Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ulisse Aldrovandi e la Toscana: Carteggio e Testimonianze Documentarie*, a cura di Alessandro Tosi, Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 1989, p.225.
[422] Givanni de' Neri was employed by Aldrovandi for some 32 years, from 1558 to 1590 and was responsible for a large proportion of the paintings in Aldrovandi's collection, Olmi, 1992, pp.64-5.
[423] 'Six pictures, four of animals and two of foreign plants; depicted live by my painter', Aldrovandi, 1989, pp.252-4.
[424] Aldrovandi, 1989, p.253.

men's shared fascination with the natural world shines forth throughout their correspondence, and bears testimony to the fact that both Francesco I and Aldrovandi recognized the scholarly value attached to the collecting of natural curiosities, and were aware of the wider educational benefits that their collaboration could produce in the form of a published work. It is likely that Aldrovandi anticipated that the Grand Duke's generosity would also extend to financial support with the publication costs of his *Natural History*, while the latter probably expected to be rewarded in the customary manner, by having his name eternally immortalized in the form of a dedicatory inscription that would be printed in every published copy of Aldrovandi's books. As it turned out, the hopes of both men were thwarted by Francesco I's sudden death in 1587, which meant that the dedicatory tribute on the frontispiece of Aldrovandi's first volume of the *Ornithologiae* (published in 1599) was given to Pope Clement VIII instead (Fig. 124).[425]

Ligozzi's zoological illustrations: the relationship between depiction and observation

As noted in Chapter 2, global navigational exploration during the fifteenth century and later led to a widening of trading networks and an increase in the importation of previously unheard of species of fauna and flora. This in turn challenged existing knowledge about natural history, which was essentially based on the scholarship of the ancients, and prompted a reappraisal of natural history and a revision of existing systems of classification to take account of the newly discovered life-forms from the New World and other unknown parts of the world.[426] Leading European naturalists took advantage of the recently invented printing press, which allowed for the juxtaposition of image and text, and began to publish encyclopaedic works in this new medium. Among the plethora of naturalist works published in Europe from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards are Konrad Gesner's four-volume *Historia animalium* (Zürich, 1551-58), Pierre Belon's *L'Histoire naturelle des estranges poissons marins avec la vraie peincture et description du Dauphin*

[425] Findlen, 1996, pp.361-3.
[426] Among the most influential zoological texts offering information on animals were the zoological treatises by the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BCE), the most influential in terms of its influence on early modern zoology was his *Historia animalium*, others he wrote included *De incessu animalium, De partibus animalium, De motu animalium, De generatione animalium.* Also very influential were Strabo's (ca.60 BCE - 20 CE) *Geography*; Pliny the Elder's (23-79 CE) *Natural History* and Ptolemy's (ca.100?-165? CE) *Geography*.

et de plusieurs autres de son espèce observée par Pierre Belon du Mans (Paris, 1551), Ulisse Aldrovandi's twelve-volume *Natural History* (Bologna, 1599-1648) and Edward Topsell's *The Historie of Four-Footed Beastes* (London, 1607). These works have often been described by historians of early modern naturalism in terms of heralding a scientific revolution in the study of zoology and botany and the dawning of 'modern science'. Linked to this is the common assumption that from the late fourteenth century onwards that painters were working increasingly from the life model when it came to depicting animals, and that this led to the creation of more reliable images of zoological specimens, ones that preserved the integrity and authenticity of the depicted subject. The following comments made by Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, who has published widely in this field of scholarship, are not atypical of the optimistic claims that are made in relation to these new encyclopaedic works in natural philosophy. Commenting on naturalist works produced 'between 1530 and 1560', she observes that the period

> [...] saw the printing of a series of botanical and zoological texts whose innovations swept away an iconographic and textual tradition that went back to mediaeval manuscripts, and had been successfully transferred to many printed volumes. This new iconography rejected pre-existing schemes and insistently emphasised the need for a direct approach to reality, using real, living plants and animals, and thus producing what was at that time known as "vivae eicones".[427]

These views are echoed by Mina Bacci, who observes that painters, in reproducing analytically the world's flora and fauna, were in symbiosis with the new scientists in creating encyclopaedic works that gradually liberated themselves from the ancient authorities.[428] Similarly, Giuseppe Olmi, commenting on images in sixteenth century natural history texts, notes that pictures largely lost the conventional characteristics and heraldic and allegorical significance associated with medieval treatises. He attributes this qualitative leap to 'l'osservazione diretta, la copia "dal vero"'.[429]

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[427] Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'Towards the scientific naturalism: aspects of botanical and zoological iconography in manuscripts and printed books in the second half of XV century, in *Die Kunst und das Studium der Natur vom 14. zum 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Wolfram Prinz and Andreas Beyer [et al], Weinheim: VCH, 1987, pp. 91-99, (p.91).
[428] Bacci, 1985/86 (p.46).
[429] 'Direct observation and copying from "the real'", Olmi, Giuseppe, 'Ulisse Aldrovandi', *FMR*, Vol.7 (1982), 45-74, (pp.51-2).

Ligozzi's work provides a test case to examine how such claims match up with reality. The artist's zoological illustrations were produced during the 1570s and 80s, a short time after the chronological timeframe discussed by Tongiorgi Tomasi's article. However, in several later articles, written by the same author, Ligozzi is often presented as the most supremely gifted hero of the new mimetic naturalism, with an exceptional capacity to render works that were 'almost more real than reality', which she explains, was because, 'Unlike most artists, who preferred to work from mounted specimens, Ligozzi with his remarkable gift of observation was able to paint directly from living models'.[430] As has been shown above, assumptions that the new artistic naturalism somehow severed its ties with the past are open to challenge, since in 'iconographic' terms alone, Ligozzi clearly still relied on the representational formula developed in and inherited from the late fourteenth century. When considered in relation to the reproduction of Ligozzi's images in Ulisse Aldrovandi's *Natural History*, Tongiorgi Tomasi's comments are equally questionable, as neither the assertion that sixteenth century and later zoological texts abandoned existing 'textual traditions', nor the notion that 'a direct approach to reality' can be upheld as the sole guiding principle in the production of these works. Three issues demonstrate that actual practice often converged from these ideas. Firstly, evidence confirms that a reliance on dead species as models and on the copying of existing images continued to be part of the naturalist painter's professional practice. This not only runs counter to the idea that the artists who painted zoological species and the naturalists who studied them 'based their observations on 'real, living plants and animals', but also raises important issues concerning authenticity, authorship and artistic individualism, which are rarely discussed in traditional accounts on early modern naturalism. Secondly, the formal distortion that occurred during the 'translation' process from primary image to the wooden matrix and then to the woodcut print, represented an ever widening gap between image and the 'real' object that was being represented. Lastly, the relationship between zoological illustration and the written information about the animals discussed will be examined briefly to test the idea that Aldrovandi's text entirely rejected previous 'textual traditions'.

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[430] Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'L'illustrazione naturalistica: tecnica e invenzione', in *Natura-Cultura: L'Interpretazione del Mondo Fisico nei Testi e nelle Immagini: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Mantova, 5-8 ottobre 1996*, ed. by Giuseppe Olmi, Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, Attilio Zanca, Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 2000, pp.133-151 (pp.141/147); Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.49.

The episode of the Libyan vipers highlights the fact that the Bolognese naturalist was evidently keen to obtain images that respected and preserved the integrity of the living thing, hence, his request for a picture that was based on the real thing, painted, as he stated 'al vivo'. Yet, that Ligozzi's animals were not always depicted from living species is confirmed in a comment made by Aldrovandi himself, which indicates that the term 'al vivo' did not then mean what it does now - from life - but that it also included animals that were preserved after death. Thus, among the many 'secrets' the naturalist had been shown during his visit to Florence, was a 'liquore' invented by Grand Duke Francesco I himself. The 'liquid' - presumably alcohol-based - according to Aldrovandi, served as a preserving fluid in which animals of various types, fish in particular, could be suspended and thus brought back from faraway places. Aldrovandi made the important point that this liquid helped to maintain the animal's natural appearance; exotic fish, for example, retained their original shape and colours - so that they could be painted from life ('per fargli dipingere al vivo').[431] However, Odoardo Giglioli's observation that it is often impossible to identify the exact genus or species of Ligozzi's painted fish undermines Aldrovandi's optimistic prognosis that Francesco's 'liquore' managed to preserve the integrity of the animal in its living condition.[432] Indeed, even when a species can be identified, the anatomical details in some cases do not resemble the living thing. An example of this is Ligozzi's depiction of a 'Pesce San Pietro' (*Zeus faber*), also known as John Dory (Fig. 125), a saltwater fish found in coastal regions of South West Africa, South East Asia, and on the coasts of Europe. According to Giglioli, in the living exemplar of the 'Pesce San Pietro', the distinctive large spot in the centre of its yellowish brown body is not light-blue, as Ligozzi has rendered it, but dark-coloured (Fig. 126). Furthermore, the shape of the living exemplar is far more circular than the conventionally elongated shape Ligozzi has given it. The characteristic spines on the fish's tail-end too are missing from the depiction and the artist must have used artistic licence in his erroneous inclusion of a pectoral fin and a row of golden-coloured disks along the fish's top flank. Given the likelihood that Ligozzi's fish was

[431] 'Vostra Altezza si degnò di mostrarmi tanti secreti, ... mi ricordo vidi un liquore fatto di sua inventione ...nel quale come corpi mommiati servava i pesci col suo proprio colore come se fossero vivi, secreto veramente da servirsene per far venire da lontano varij animali inchiusi in quel liquore che conserva 1'animal come se fosse vivo. Varii pesci peregrini et lontani mari potrà far portar in questo liquore per fargli dipingere al vivo', Aldrovandi, 1989, p.240.

[432] Giglioli, Odoardo H., 'Jacopo Ligozzi Disegnatore e Pittore di Piante e Animali', *Dedalo*, Vol. 4 (1923-24), 554-570 (p.562).

painted from a specimen that had been preserved in Francesco I's 'liquore', it is probable that advanced decomposition accounts for some of the anatomical anomalies, rather than Ligozzi's 'estro squisitamento pittorico' ('exquisite pictorial fancy').[433] This example highlights the fact that although working from a dead animal accorded with the idea of 'a direct approach to reality', the artist could not always guarantee life-like results. Furthermore, the reliance on animals whose anatomical appearances had somehow been altered through the processes of preservation is hardly compatible with the notion asserted above, that artists and naturalists based their impressions and findings on the 'real' and 'living' thing, as claimed by Tongiorgi Tomasi and others.[434] The author's scholarship focuses primarily on botanical illustrations, and it was generally much easier to paint and observe plants from life since these could be preserved in their living condition much more successfully. However, it is neither possible, nor realistic, to make analogous assumptions regarding zoological naturalism. As we noted earlier, the survival rate of birds and small mammals was poor, and even the heater which Montaigne observed in the Pratolino aviary was probably insufficient to prevent the deaths of delicate and exotic birds that were used to warmer climes.

One of the Libyan snakes, as we have witnessed, met the same fate shortly after arriving in Bologna, which prompted Aldrovandi's appeal to the Grand Duke to let him have the picture Ligozzi painted of the two reptiles. The episode of the snakes raises another important issue concerning animal depiction: the practice of copying from existing images, which further contradicts the idea that zoological studies were produced from the artist's observation of the living animal. For a letter, written in March 1580, by Francesco I to Aldrovandi, confirms that the picture that was eventually dispatched to Bologna, in

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[433] Giglioli, 1923-24 (p.562).

[434] Claudia Swan makes a similar point in relation to the classification of rare species of fish by the Dutch naturalist Carolus Clusius (1526-1609), whose descriptions often relied on dried and deformed specimens, Swan, Claudia, 'From Blowfish to Flower Still-Life Paintings', in *Merchants & Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Pamela H. Smith & Paula Findlen, New York; London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 109-136 (pp.116-8). Wilma George, likewise, notes that most species of paradise birds from New Guinea and the Malaya spice islands reached Europe only in dried form, and often with their heads and feet missing, which explains why they are invariably described and illustrated inaccurately in naturalist encyclopaedia published before the end of the eighteenth century, George, 1980, (pp.92-94).

December of that year, was not the original, but a 'copia di quei duoi serpenti'.[435] It is curious to note, however, that the original painting Ligozzi produced for the Grand Duke and the copy he made for Aldrovandi are not an exact match (compare Figs. 111 and 127). The painting in Francesco I's collection depicts two entwined Saharan horned vipers in the upper register and a Saharan sand viper underneath; in the picture that was sent to Aldrovandi the two species of snakes were conflated into a single entwined formation. Yet in every other respect the representation of the animals and their compositional arrangement closely resemble the original painting. Ligozzi is known to have produced other copies of the works he had produced for Francesco I that were then sent on to Aldrovandi.[436] Examples include his painting of a *Bird of Paradise and two Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree* (Fig. 128), which again was replicated almost verbatim, but as two separate compositions (Figs. 129-130). Requirements concerning the transfer of the image to print were probably instrumental in the altered composition (Fig. 131). However, it is also possible that Francesco I may have wanted to preserve the authenticity of the original pictures in his collection, or that Ligozzi was unwilling to compromise the integrity of his reputation as a naturalist painter, since it is clear that the artist could have produced exact copies had he wished to do so. In either case, what this highlights is that the pictures of the Libyan vipers and that of the exotic finches in Aldrovandi's collection were clearly not painted from direct '*al vivo*' observation, but were copied from existing works. It is arguable whether even the original picture of the Libyan vipers was painted directly form life, since it seems doubtful that the two reptiles, which are represented in their customary mating 'dance', would have remained still for long enough to enable the artist to render them in this graceful and sinuous formation. What we are witnessing, therefore, is not an exact depiction of the 'thing' itself (*natura naturata*), but nature seen through the lens of Ligozzi's eye, trained in the aesthetic convention of Florentine mannerism. This highlights that the skills of a naturalist painter evidently included both the capability to create life-like depictions of zoological specimens, and the ability to 'improve' upon nature by means of

[435] 'Copy of the said two serpents', Aldrovandi, 1989, p.273.
[436] Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi notes that about twenty images in Aldrovandi's collection are replicas from the '*corpus ligozziano*', Tongiorgi Tomasi, 1984, p.53, fn.60.

aesthetic intervention and the application of Vasari's principles of '*invenzione*' and '*disegno*' (*natura naturans*).[437]

Jacopo Ligozzi, as has been noted above, was not the only member of the Ligozzi family to produce naturalist paintings and, in the case of his cousin Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, these skills evidently also extended to the ability to produce very precise copies of existing zoological paintings. Thus, from payment records, we learn that 'Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi', who had joined Jacopo's *bottega* in Florence in May 1590, was to be paid for ten pictures of '10 sorte d'animali terrestri e celestri di diverse sorte Indiani copiati da quelli [dipinti] fatti Jacopo lighozzo' (see Appendix 14).[438] The list of ten paintings of birds and mammals Francesco was asked to copy from original zoological illustrations created by Jacopo, included depictions of a 'coniglio dell'Indie'(a South American agouti) and one of a 'topo de Indie' (compare Figs. 132a-b and 133a-b).[439] The copies were made at the request of Francesco I's successor, Ferdinando I de' Medici, and were later sent to Aldrovandi, which implies that Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi's replicas were created some time after the original illustrations, and probably long after the animals themselves had died.[440] This, combined with the fact that the copies, in this instance, were produced not by the Jacopo himself, but by his cousin, means that the images are yet another step removed from the idea expressed above that zoological illustrations were the result of the artist's 'direct observation and copying from the real'. Nevertheless, the fact that Francesco was able to reproduce Jacopo's zoological illustrations with such exactitude and in such detail highlights that the discipline and technical skills required of the naturalist painter evidently included the ability to create precise and accurate copies of existing works created by other

[437] Bacci, 1986, Vol. 3: Biografie, (p.105); on the distinctions between 'the imitation of created nature (*natura naturata*), and the imitation of creating nature (*natura naturans*)' see Bialostocki, Jan, 'The Renaissance Concept of Nature and Antiquity', in *The Renaissance and Mannerism: Studies in Western Art: Acts of the Twentieth International Congress of the History of Art,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, Vol. II, pp.19-30.

[438] '10 types of land and air animals [i.e. mammals and birds] of Indian origin copied from those [paintings] made by Jacopo Ligozzi', ASF, GM,162, c.50r. (5 May 1590); ASF, GM, 184, Ins. 1, c.14 r. (6 June 1590); ASF, GM 163, cc. 47v.- 48 r. (18 June 1590); the documents are listed in Conigliello, 1990 (p.38, fn.22); for a list of the animals see Tongiorgi Tomasi, 1984, (p.54, fn.61).

[439] ASF, Guardaroba Medicea, 184, Ins.1, c.14 r. (6 June 1590).

[440] Aldrovandi gratefully acknowledged the arrival of the 'ritratti degli animali' ('portraits or copies of the animals') in a letter dated 3 July 1590, Aldrovandi, 1989, p.383; Eight of the ten 'Indian' animals still appear in seven successive folios in Volume I of the *Tavole di Animali* (books of animal illustrations), BUB, Tavole di animali, Vol. I, cc.152-58.

practitioners. The practice of copying from an existing prototype, as we have seen in previous chapters, was part of a longstanding artistic tradition; however, the act of reproduction in this context was done to a much higher degree of accuracy and fidelity to the original illustration. In other words, copying was still in use, but it had acquired a new level of sophistication, one that matched the images' more serious purpose, namely to provide accurate and reliable data about the world's living species, in a format that made it suitable for reproduction in printed form.

The fact that Jacopo Ligozzi's works were copied by his cousin, Francesco di Mercurio, and to a standard that is almost indistinguishable from that of the original paintings, raises important issues regarding authorship, originality and authenticity. Although Tongiorgi Tomasi and others acknowledge that the collaboration between Jacopo and other family members causes problems in attribution, these issues are usually side-stepped and left unresolved.[441] Yet perhaps our modern obsession with the work of art as the authentic expression of an individual maker entirely misses the point when it comes to zoological and botanical illustrations. As we have seen, Ligozzi's animal paintings, in the first instance, were meant to record and to show to the viewer (Francesco I and his courtly audience) in a very precise and accurate way what an animal looked like. Moreover, the fact that their secondary role was to serve as pictorial models for the production of printed plates (aimed at a wider audience), meant that they had to conform to certain formal conventions that facilitated easy transfer of the original design, and clear articulation of the portrayed zoological subject. We have already noted that the depiction of the animal in isolation and as a fixed subject in a profile-view pose was ideally suited to that purpose, and it is perhaps no coincidence that this is still the format most commonly used in modern-day natural history books. It appears that a certain stylistic conformity also applied when it came to the 'filling in' of the contour shape, the depiction of the animal's outer appearance. This can be seen in the close generic relationship between the tree studies of a Helmeted Curassow, created by Arcimboldo, Jacopo and Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi (Figs. 106-108), and in the other works discussed. The inference to be drawn from this is that when it

[441] Tongiorgi Tomasi, 1984, (p.55); Conigliello, 1990, (p.38, fn.22); Olmi, Giuseppe, *L'inventario del mondo: Catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 1992, p.84.

came to natural history painting, stylistic consistency and formal uniformity were probably considered a virtue, and thus encouraged, which would explain the seeming lack of creative individuality within the genre zoological and botanical illustration, and why artists were able to reproduce their own work and that of others with such apparent ease. What Aldrovandi's venture may have helped to encourage, therefore, was a kind of 'in-house' style, which depended as much on the artist's ability to portray what was seen, as it did on making the visual information fit for its intended purpose; that is, in an artistic language that was homogeneous, impersonal, clear in its schematic formality and capable of communicating complex scientific ideas in an easily accessible manner. Thus, the courtly style of animal depiction that first emerged in the modelbook schema, with its own idiosyncrasies and formal conventions, was gradually evolved and refined in the natural history illustration, to adapt the image to its new role: to serve in the natural scientists' cataloguing endeavour.

The process of 'translating' Ligozzi's zoological illustrations into print and their role in the cataloguing process

When it came to actual images, it appears that Aldrovandi was mainly furnished with copies of extant works from his Medici patrons, rather than the originals, this has meant that the images in the naturalist's collection no longer had that direct link to the 'real' thing observed. The act of 'translating' the painting to print widened that gap even further, because the process involved various stages of production and the intervention of numerous artists and craftsmen who subjected their own interpretation on the final image. This began with the preparation of the wooden matrixes used for the production of the woodcut prints in Aldrovandi's published texts, which were created by a specialist '*delineatore*' (designer) and an '*intagliatore*' (form-cutter or engraver). Typically, a '*delineatore*' transferred the design of the original painting to a tablet made from pear wood. Cornelio Schwindt from Frankfurt, who worked for Aldrovandi for five years (1590-1595) and designed most of the matrixes, was particularly skilled in this process.[442] The matrixes were then passed to the '*intagliatore*', who cut away the negative spaces around

[442] Tommasini, Stefano and Maria Cristina Tagliaferri, 'La ricerca zoologica' in *Il teatro della natura di Ulisse Aldrovandi*, ed. by Raffaella Simili, Bologna: Compositori, 2001, pp.60-82, p.81.

the design to produce the raised image on the block. In Aldrovandi's *bottega* much of this work was done by another German craftsman, Cristoforo Coriolano, from Nüremberg (ca.1540-?). Coriolano, during his fifteen years of service for the naturalist, was responsible for cutting a large proportion of the 3647 wooden matrixes that were recorded in Aldrovandi's studio in July 1599.[443] The surviving matrixes that were used to create the plates in Aldrovandi's *Natural History*, allow us to judge both the character and quality of the incised wooden tablets, as well as their relationship to the zoological illustrations and the printed images (Figs. 134a-c). It is clear that Aldrovandi's craftsmen and printers achieved remarkable results in terms of fidelity to the original work; however, certain qualities were inevitably lost in 'translation'. For example, very fine lines and small details visible in the painting, could often not be reproduced in the printed image. This is why naturalists such as Aldrovandi avoided highly detailed cuts.[444] It seems feasible that the artists who produced the primary images were encouraged to take this into consideration and adjusted their techniques accordingly. Jacopo Ligozzi, for example, when painting the plumage of birds, made sure to distinguish each feather from its neighbour by clear and meticulous delineation (e.g. see Figs.120c-d), while other anatomical details, such as the feet, claws, beaks and eyes were often depicted in an almost generic graphic manner (Figs. 135a-c). Such technical adjustments helped to ensure that the printed plate would retain the clarity of the original design, but they are hardly compatible with the idea that Ligozzi's zoological illustrations represented a 'true-to-life reproduction of nature'.[445] The 'translation' from the original painting to the woodcut print had a number of other drawbacks. The sense of perspective and modelling, for instance, was largely lost in the flattened effect of the printed image. More important still was the lack of colour, which was such a vital element in Ligozzi's naturalist works and provided crucial information about an animal or plant, particularly when the species in question was rare and unfamiliar (Figs. 136a-b). Aldrovandi was clearly aware of this limitation, for he noted that 'tutte le cose sensate che conosciamo al mondo, le conosciamo per questo accidente inseparabile del

[443] Tommasini, Stefano and Maria Cristina Tagliaferri, 'La ricerca zoologica' in Raffaella Simili (ed.), *Il teatro della natura di Ulisse Aldrovandi*, Bologna: Compositori, 2001, pp.60-82, pp.81-2; Olmi, Giuseppe, *L'inventario del mondo: Catalogazione della natura e luoghi del sapere nella prima età moderna*, Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 1992, p.90, fn.233.
[444] Dickenson, Victoria, *Drawn from Life: Science and Art in the Portrayal of the New World,* University of Toronto Press, 1998, pp.55-6.
[445] Conigliello, 2005, p.8.

colore, il quale è oggetto certissimo del vedere'.[446] Indeed, in some very rare early editions of the *Ornithologiae* an attempt had been made to hand-colour the plates, and although these do give some impression of the represented species' pigmentation, the lustre and nuanced chromatic scale of the original painting could not be replicated on the printed page (Fig. 137). In spite of these drawbacks, the contribution Ligozzi and other painters made to early modern naturalism cannot be underestimated, for it was their zoological and botanical illustrations that made possible the complementary coexistence of printed image and text, which introduced a new and innovative dimension to the new scholarly naturalist texts.

In April 1588, shortly after the death of Francesco I de' Medici, Aldrovandi wrote a letter to Belisario Vinta (1542-1613), Ferdinando I's first Secretary of State to the Grand Duchy, in which the naturalist explained in some detail the system under which he categorized and classified the species described in his *Natural History*.[447] The letter offers evidence that Aldrovandi was evidently eager to establish a relationship with the new ruler of Tuscany, similar to the one he had shared with Francesco I, and that he actively sought to engage Ferdinando I in his research project. The method of classification outlined in the letter also makes it clear that the naturalist relied on zoological illustrations not just as visual templates for the creation of the printed plates, but also for the purpose of classifying species. At the most basic level, Aldrovandi divided species into earthbound, airborne, waterborne and subterranean species and under these categories he grouped quadrupeds and 'bipedi' (two-legged animals), birds, fish, serpents and insects. The quadrupeds were further sub-divided into odd-toed ungulates and even-toed ungulates, and animals with 'digitati' (claws). Waterfowl were distinguished by their webbed feet from birds whose spiny curved feet allowed them to balance on trees, and so on.[448] Aldrovandi was thus rejecting earlier models of alphabetical sub-categorization, as used in Konrad Gesner's (1516-1565) four-volume *Historia animalium*, in favour of a more up-to-date method of placing animals into homogenous groups based on their anatomical, physiological and

[446] 'All the living things we know in the world, we distinguish them by their accidental [unique] and inseparable colour, this is the true function of vision', Aldrovandi quoted in Tommasini, Stefano and Maria Cristina Tagliaferri, 'La ricerca zoologica', in *Il teatro della natura di Ulisse Aldrovandi*, ed. by Raffaella Simili, Bologna: Compositori, 2001, pp.60-82 (p.82).
[447] Letter dated April 1588, Aldrovandi, 1989, pp.370-9.
[448] Aldrovandi, 1989, pp.370-72.

morphological characteristics.[449] Clearly, accurate visual information was a crucial factor in this system of classification and categorization, especially if the animal in question was rare and unknown, as in the case of the 'American pig' (Collared peccary) (Figs. 115/138), with its peculiar dorsal gland. It was also particularly important if the naturalist was unable to study animals personally, as was the case with the abovementioned pictures of an 'Uro', 'Turo' and an 'Alce' that Aldrovandi had received from a Polish source. The zoological illustrations Aldrovandi obtained from the Medici Dukes and other powerful individuals thus played an instrumental role in his objective to adopt a more up-to-date approach to the categorization of zoological species.

However, in other respects Aldrovandi's classificatory system was firmly rooted to the past. As William B. Ashworth observes, in Aldrovandi's work zoological species were discussed less in terms of their unique placement within the taxonomic system, but in accordance to a complex network of arcane associations concerning contemporary ideas about the cosmological order. Ashworth identifies some thirty-three branches of knowledge that informed the ways in which species were conceptualized in Aldrovandi's *Natural History* (Figs. 139).[450] This shows that the naturalist's theories concerning animals were principally informed by ancient zoology and history - chief among them Aristotle's *Historia animalium* and Pliny the Elder's *Historia naturalis* - as well as Western medieval and contemporary ideas on animal emblems, symbolisms and allegories. Aldrovandi's adherence to the 'emblematic world view', as Ashworth calls it, whereby the natural world was articulated and presented through some form of archaic prism of 'metaphor, symbols and emblems', is clearly at odds with Tongiorgi Tomasi's idea (noted earlier) that Renaissance botanical and zoological texts 'rejected pre-existing schemes'.[451] In fact, it was not until the publication of Johannes Jonston's *Natural History* (1650), fifty years after Aldrovandi's death, that, in the eloquent words of the biologist François Jacob, naturalists finally 'shook off their crust of analogies, resemblances and signs, ... [and when] [w]hat

[449] Faber Kolb, Arianne, *Jan Brueghel the Elder, The Entry of the Animals into Noah's Ark*, Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005, pp.25-6.
[450] Ashworth, Jr., William B., 'Natural history and the emblematic world view', in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution,* ed. by David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp.303-332, (p.314).
[451] For a list of sources used by Aldrovandi see Ashworth, 1990, pp.303-332; Faber Kolb, 2005, p.24.

was read or related no longer carried the weight of what was seen'.[452] Nevertheless, Aldrovandi's *Natural History*, both in its breadth and scope was a remarkable achievement and marked an important step towards a more advanced way of categorizing zoological species. Moreover, the argument has shown that the fruitful collaboration between courtly patron, naturalist painter and scientist was an essential element in generating new learning about the natural world and in making that knowledge available to a wider audience. As for Ligozzi's position in the history of naturalist painting, his work, too, can be placed somewhere between the early Renaissance past and the 'modern' area, as his zoological illustrations were influenced as much by the force of tradition as by the power of his personal observation and his undoubted technical abilities.

Part II: Florentine hardstone manufacture under Ferdinando I and Cosimo II: the influence of Ligozzi's zoological paintings in the development of a naturalist-inspired *pietra dura* artefact

Ulisse Aldrovandi's multivolume *Natural History* is typical of the humanist spirit and scholarly ethos that underpinned early modern natural philosophy, insofar as it demonstrated the collective objective to expand and disseminate human understanding about the world's fauna and flora. In the context of *pietra dura* objects, Ligozzi's images assumed a somewhat different meaning and function, determined, in this case, more by Ferdinando I's (and his successors') artistic tastes, cultural priorities and commercial interests than by wider educational purpose. Ligozzi's work has hitherto been assessed almost exclusively under two opposing poles - either in relation Aldrovandi's natural history books or in the context of Florentine *pietra dura* production. This division has clouded our understanding of the Ligozzi corpus. The purpose of the following analysis, therefore, is to highlight the fact that the boundaries between scientific naturalism and decorative naturalism in the early modern period were often far more blurred and fluid than the clear demarcations that our modern age likes to impose on the sciences and the arts. I have already shown that scientific naturalism is a conceit, for artists made choices in depiction related to the reproduction of the image into woodcut prints. The fact that Ligozzi's works have lent themselves so readily to being adapted or re-contextualized to

[452] François Jacob quoted in Ashworth, 1990, (p.317)

different contexts is indicative of the pragmatic attitude contemporaries showed towards works the genre of naturalist painting.

Ferdinando I de' Medici's creation of the *Opificio di Pietre Dure*

Francesco I's successor, Ferdinando I de' Medici, while initially promising continued support of Aldrovandi's enterprise, appears to have been less enthusiastic than his brother about the Bolognese naturalist's project. Archival documents and letters indicate that, like his predecessor, Ferdinando I furnished the naturalist with paintings of flora and fauna and on one occasion with a live eagle.[453] However, as Paula Findlen observes, the new Grand Duke did not offer the naturalist the same status as had Francesco I, nor was he willing to finance Aldrovandi's future publications, in spite of the fact that Aldrovandi promised to dedicate to Ferdinando I all of his future works.[454] Jacopo Ligozzi's career, likewise, was much transformed under the new ruler of Tuscany and his services as scientific draughtsman were evidently not valued as highly as they had been by Francesco I. Archival documents dating from 1588 to 1593 indicate that, following Ferdinando I's accession, Jacopo Ligozzi was assigned more varied tasks. This included the creation of a series of paintings for the state galley that was to transport Ferdinando I's young French bride, Christine de Lorraine (1565-1636), from Marseille to Livorno, and other decorations in preparation for the couple's wedding celebrations in 1589.[455] Between 1590 and 1592, the artist was working on the prestigious commission of painting two large murals on slate, one representing the *Coronation of Grand Duke Cosimo I* (completed in 1591) and the other *Pope Boniface VIII receiving the Florentine Ambassadors* (completed 1592), at the *Salone dei Cinquecento* at the Palazzo Vecchio.[456] Ligozzi's engagement with this large undertaking may explain why the job of reproducing zoological works for Aldrovandi was assigned to Jacopo's cousin, Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi. However, following a dispute with Ferdinando I's Guardaroba, Benedetto Fedini, over a commission he undertook for the Capuchin monks of San Gimignano, Ligozzi's relations with the Grand-ducal court began

[453] Aldrovandi, 1989, pp.383/385.
[454] Findlen, 1996, pp.360-61.
[455] See documents relating to No. 35 'Bottega di Jacopo Ligozzi 1588-1593, in Barocchi, Paola and Gaeta Bertelà, Giovanna (eds.), *Collezionismo mediceo e storia artistica: Da Cosimo I a Cosimo II, 1540-1621*, 2 Vols, Firenze: Studio per edizione scelte, 2002-, Vol. 1, pp. 372-76.
[456] Conigliello, 1990, (pp.24/38, fn.21).

to deteriorate, and although the artist agreed to continue working for the Medici as a *stipendiato* (salaried worker), from January 1593 the artist's name no longer appears on the register of salaried court personnel.[457] Lacking the security of his monthly wage, he set up his own workshop in the Via Larga in 1594 and began to subsidise his income with the production of religious altarpieces from independent sources of patronage.[458] Although Ligozzi never entirely severed connections with the Medici court, Lucilla Conigliello suggests that it was not until Cosimo II's accession that the artist's graphic skills in the rendition of naturalist subjects were once again recognized by the Medici court. Thus, from 1609 Ligozzi began to produce new drawings for the Duke, used primarily in the creation of decorative objects in *pietra dura*, glass and other media, and from the 1620s onwards, the last decade of Jacopo Ligozzi's life, the artist's name once more featured on the Grand-ducal registers as a court artist with a fixed salary.[459]

Differences in personality, artistic taste and cultural priorities are likely to have influenced the attitudes individual Medici Grand Dukes displayed towards Ulisse Aldrovandi's research project and Ligozzi's analytical zoological and botanical illustrations. Francesco I de' Medici was described as 'a man of quiet thoughts' with a 'melancholy disposition', who spent much of his time shut away from the world in his laboratory, absorbed with his scientific experiments.[460] These character traits and interests would have made him more favourably inclined to support Aldrovandi's venture. Ferdinando I, in contrast, enjoyed a reputation as a more personable and outgoing man, with a taste for extravagance and ostentation, which perhaps explains why Ligozzi's botanical and zoological works were adapted to the creation of more tactile, ornate and lavish material objects.[461] The new Grand Duke is also said to have been a more astute and capable politician than his brother had been, and this is evident in his objective, established early on in his reign, to centralize and rationalize the Grand-ducal workshops by moving production from the *Casino* di San Marco to the grander and more official Uffizi. Thus, in 1588, only one year after his inauguration as Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinando I became

[457] Conigliello, 1990, (pp.24-25/38, fn.23).
[458] Conigliello, 2005, p.16.
[459] Conigliello, 2005, pp.8/17.
[460] Hibbert, 1979, p.275.
[461] Hibbert, 1979, p.279.

the first European ruler to set up state-run workshops, the so-called *Galleria dei Lavori*.[462] The project demonstrates that the new Tuscan ruler was keen to concentrate his energies and material resources on creative projects that would both enhance Florence's reputation as a centre of artistic excellence and produce employment and crucial revenue for the Court and the wider communities. That material considerations were at the heart of the enterprise can be gauged form an exchange between Aldrovandi and Girolamo Mercuriale - naturalist and court physician to Ferdinando I. For when the former lamented the fact that the Ferdinando I was unwilling to finance his publishing venture, he was given the explanation by the latter that "Today the minds of Princes are inclined more to earning than to spending".[463] One of the most successful and also very lucrative parts of Ferdinando I's commercial and artistic enterprise was the Opificio di Pietre Dure, which formed part of the *Galleria dei Lavori* and was geared to the production of Florence's famous *pietra dura* (hardstone) artefacts.

The Opificio di Pietre Dure (the workshop for the production of hardstone) was an important part of the Grand-ducal workshops and from the outset 'achieved international fame for its creations in *pietre dure*' and subsequently became the model for the production of such artefacts at other European courts.[464] Although both Ferdinando I's father, Cosimo I, and his brother, Francesco I, had experimented with the manufacture of *pietra dura* objects, production under their leadership had focused primarily on abstract patterns in emulation of Roman intarsia. Ferdinando I, in contrast, preferred a more naturalist style that reflected the 'modern' age. Annamaria Giusti claimed that the shift towards more naturalist designs in hardstone manufacture not only signalled a 'change from abstraction to imitation', but that the influence of 'Ligozzi's pure naturalism' resulted in artefacts that 'represented an ideal marriage of nature, art and science'.[465] Giusti's comments highlight the fact that in the scholarly literature on Florentine Grand-ducal *pietra dura* production, Jacopo Ligozzi is generally cited as the prime mover of the new naturalism in *pietra dura*

[462] Giusti, Annamaria, 'The Origins and Splendors of the Grand-Ducal *Pietre Dure* Workshops', in Cristina, Acidini Luchinat, [et al.], *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002, pp.103-111, (p.103).
[463] Mercuriale quoted in Findlen, 1996, p.361.
[464] Giusti, 2002, (p.103).
[465] Giusti, 2002, (p.105).

production that was introduced by Ferdinando I de' Medici's and continued later by Cosimo II.[466] The following analysis will reassess both Giusti's broader assumption that the naturalist style can be defined as 'imitation' in a pure sense, and to test the extent to which it is possible to determine accurately the impact and contribution Ligozzi's zoological paintings made in Florentine *pietra dura* production. The argument will consider the following issues: the design stage and the techniques of *commesso* hardstone inlay, iconography and authorship, materials and aesthetic considerations.

Florentine *pietra dura* production: the design process and the techniques of *commesso* hardstone inlay

Annamaria Giusti, who is the principal authority on the art of Florentine *pietra dura* and has published widely in this field of scholarship, notes that Jacopo Ligozzi spent the last two decades of his life producing compositions of flowers, birds, and insects to be used in the making of the new-style naturalist-inspired *pietra dura* artefacts.[467] Although Alvar Gonzàlez-Palacios' discovery of payment records from the Medici archive confirm that between 1601-1622 Ligozzi was being paid for designs he made for various *pietra dura* works, there is in fact little direct and tangible visual evidence that allows us to link Ligozzi's individual designs to specific hardstone artefacts. [468] Indeed, none of the numerous lavishly illustrated books and articles published by Annamaria Giusti and Alvar Gonzàlez-Palacios actually feature the artist's preliminary designs alongside *pietra dura* objects. The only exception is a tabletop now in the Palazzo Pitti's *Galleria Palatina*,

[466] Giusti, Annamaria, ' The Grand Ducal Workshops at the Time of Ferdinando I and Cosimo II', in Cristina, Acidini Luchinat, (ed.), *Treasures of Florence: The Medici Collection 1400-1700*, Munich; New York: Prestel, 1997, pp. 115-143, (p.118/132); Giusti, 2002, (p.109); Gonzàlez-Palacios, Alvar, *Il Gusto dei Principi: Arte a Corte del XVII e del XVIII Secolo*, 2Vols, Milano: Longanesi, 1993, Vol.1, pp.389-99); Gonzàlez-Palacios, Alvar, *Il tempio del Gusto. Il Granducato di Toscana e gli Stati Settentrionali : Le Arti Decorative in Italia fra Classicismi e Barocco*, 2 Vols, Milano : Longanesi, 1986, Vol.1, pp.64 -65/76-77

[467] Giusti, 1997 (p.118); Giusti, 2002 (p.109); Giusti, Annamaria, *Pietre Dure and the Art of Florentine Inlay*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2006, p.64; Giusti, Annamaria, 'Origine e Sviluppi della Manifattura Granducale', in *Splendori di Pietre Dure: L'Arte di Corte nella Firenze dei Granduchi* (exhib.cat.), ed. by Annamaria Giusti, Firenze: Giunti, 1988, pp.10-23, p.14; Giusti, Annamaria, 'Roman inlay and Florentine Mosaics: The new Art of Pietre Dure', in *Art of the Royal Court : Treasures in Pietre Dure from the Palaces of Europe*, ed. by Wolfram Koeppe, New York, New Haven; London : Yale University Press, 2008, p.20.

[468] For a transcript of the documents see Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, pp.396-99.

which both authors connect to Ligozzi's painting of a *Bird of Paradise and Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree* where the relationship is obvious and undisputable (Figs. 128/ 140a-d).[469] Before going on to discussing this, and other *pietra dura* objects that have been linked to the influence of Ligozzi, it is important to consider briefly the design process and the techniques used in the production of *commesso* hardstone inlay. This will help to explain not only the lack of surviving preparatory drawings, particularly in relation to the designs Jacopo Ligozzi is thought to have produced during the first two decades of the seventeenth century, but also to elucidate why it is so difficult to match designs to actual *pietra dura* objects.

A famous hardstone *Tabletop with Scattered Flowers* (1614-21), now displayed in the room of the Hermaphrodite at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence (Fig.141) dates from this later period of Ligozzi's service for the Medici court. The iconography features no animals and the object is therefore not directly relevant to my research. However, Gonzàlez-Palacios's detailed consideration of the work itself and the archival sources that document Ligozzi's involvement in the design process serve to illustrate the painstaking procedures that were necessary to produce the visual templates and the time it took Ligozzi to conceive the intricate iconography for this particular *pietra dura* artefact.[470] Based upon his interpretation of the written documents, Gonzàlez-Palacios identifies five separate stages in the initial design process; this began in 1614 with a 'frieze of flowers' executed in pen and mounted on canvas that was to serve as the overall design for the table. A similar design was executed in colour. Next, Ligozzi created individual studies of each of the sixty-five flowers, first in pen and then in colour, the former serving as templates for the stone motifs, and the latter for the selection of the stones. Finally, secondary copies of all the designs were made; these so-called '*spolveri*' were pricked and then used to transfer the image to the hardstone. This laborious process took nearly three years to complete.[471] Given the work and time involved in producing the preliminary designs for *pietra dura* works, it is likely that such designs were frequently reused and copied for other contemporaneous and

[469] Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1986, Vol.1, pp.76-7; Vol.2, Illustrations 184-7; *Splendori di pietre dure: L'Arte di Corte nella Firenze dei Granduchi* (Exhib. cat), ed. by Annamaria Giusti, Firenze: Giunti, 1988**,** pp.108-9
[470] See 'Il tavolino dei fiori sparsi' Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, pp.391-92, for documents see pp.397-99.
[471] Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, p.391.

later works.[472] The utilitarian nature and purpose of the working models also meant that they are unlikely to have been signed or even necessarily preserved once the drawings had become too fragile or the iconography was obsolete. This may explain why my own searches among the body of Ligozzi's work preserved at the Gabinetto Disegni have failed to turn up any surviving designs from this later period of his work for the Medici court.

In addition to this, visual schema for the *Galleria dei Lavori* were often produced in a collaborative process, and as Gonzàlez-Palacios explains, it is not impossible to imagine that painted models begun by Bernardino Poccetti twenty years earlier were continued afterwards by Ligozzi, and eventually completed by Baccio del Bianco, who survived the latter by nearly three decades.[473] This clearly poses problems in attributing the primary visual templates to a particular maker. Moreover, as has been shown in the adaptation of Ligozzi's zoological works to the printed plates in Aldrovandi's *Natural History*, the process of 'translating' designs to the medium of hardstone required the intervention of various intermediary craft processes, executed by specialist stonecutters. At the Opificio di Pietre Dure this was work was undertaken by a team of Milanese craftsmen.[474] The more naturalist style in *pietra dura* design was part of Ferdinando I's policy to promote the Grand-ducal workshops as cutting edge in terms of technology, craftsmanship and iconography. Hence, the Milanese masters, Giovanni Ambrogio and Stefano Caroni and Giorgio, Cristofano and Bernardino Gaffuri, were encouraged to develop new techniques of *pietre dure* inlay that would allow for more fluid lines and painterly effects.[475] In a letter written in October 1601, by Ferdinando I to Count Bardi di Vernio (his ambassador in Rome), the Grand Duke proudly described the

> [...] nuovo modo di rappresentare in marmi commessi insieme non in foggia ordinaria di musaico, ma con altro più ingegnoso artificio... [e] con i colori

[472] Among the examples noted by Gonzàlez-Palacios is the tabletop created for 'Madama Serenissima Madre' (Ferdinando I's wife Christine de Lorraine), see Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, pp.392-3.
[473] Gonzàlez-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, p.404.
[474] In 1572 Francesco I hired the brothers Ambrogio and Stefano Caroni, and three years later Giorgio Gaffurri, all three craftsmen were from Milan and had been trained as vase-carvers, they were given workshop space at the *Casino di San Marco*, and following Ferdinand's establishment of the *Galleria dei Lavori* their studios were transferred to the Uffizi, on this see Giusti, 1997 (p.125); Giusti, 2002 (p.106); Giusti, 2006, p.64.
[475] Giusti, 1997, pp.115-143/125; Giusti, 2002, pp.103-111/106-107.

> natural,...[e] in una compositione di pietra così al vivo effigiata l'immagine; come si vorrebbe in pittura col pennello. [476]

The 'new mode' of 'painting in stone' was achieved by selecting suitable pieces from the available collection of hardstone slices that had been sawn from various stone blocks, these were then cut into the desired shapes (usually following a traced image) with a bow saw. The edges of the cut pieces were polished with abrasive substances to create precise profiles to ensure that the various pieces of stone fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle to produce seamless forms and uninterrupted contours, as indicated in Ferdinando I's letter. Care was taken to select appropriate patterns and colours from the 'stone palette' in order to achieve the required effects of texture, chromatic modulations, and transitions from light to dark tones. As Agostino del Riccio explained, the finished artefact would thus appear as if it had been created 'tutta d'un pezzo', in contrast to earlier works where transitions from one section of stone to another were clearly marked out.[477] The tabletops discussed below provide a sense of the development from hard-edged geometrical compositions towards a more fluid and organic form of *commesso* inlay (Figs. 146-150). After careful selection and painstaking preparation, the inlay pieces were glued onto a backing slab (usually black marble) using a natural rosin and wax glue, and once the mosaic was assembled and fixed, the entire surface would be polished to a very high and glossy shine (Fig. 142).[478] The technical sophistication developed in the Grand-ducal *pietre dure* workshops could achieve astonishing degrees of naturalism; yet in contradiction to the comments in Ferdinando I's letter to Count Bardi di Vernio, the immutable medium of stone was hardly capable of reproducing the degree of mimetic verisimilitude and the illusionism of Ligozzi's zoological illustrations. Indeed, the method of 'translation' meant that the traced pattern that was used to determine the segments into which the stone motif would be cut motif made it necessary to reduce the depicted zoological or botanical design back to its most

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[476] '[The] new mode of representing in stone placed together not in the ordinary manner of mosaic, but by means of another more ingenious artifice, and with natural colours, ...and a composition in stone so naturalistically represented pictorially, as one achieves in a picture painted with a brush', Letter reproduced in Zobi, Antonio, *Notizie Storiche sull'Origine e Progressi dei Lavori di Commesso in Pietre Dure che si Eseguiscono nell' I. E. R. Stablimento di Firenze*, Firenze, 1853, pp.186-8.
[477] 'All of one piece', Gnoli, Raniero and Attilia Sironi (eds), *Istoria delle pietre di Agostino del Riccio*, Torino: Umberto Allemandi, 1996, p.183.
[478] Giusti, 2006, pp.253-7.

basic flattened and schematised form. Hence, both the process and effect were not dissimilar to that of adapting Ligozzi's images to Aldrovandi's printed plates.

As has been shown, the functional nature of the designs, the various, complex intermediary crafts processes that were necessary to produce hardstone artefacts go some way in explaining the lack of surviving designs that were specifically executed for *pietra dura* production. Moreover, the limitations imposed by the medium into which the painted designs were 'translated' make clear why it is often not possible to connect Ligozzi's designs to specific hardstone objects. Yet focusing the spotlight on exactly this relationship between Ligozzi's zoological images and *pietra dura* artefacts seems to me a worthwhile experiment to undertake, not just to draw attention to the difficulties involved in attempting to establish clear and unequivocal links between particular primary designs and hardstone objects, but ultimately to underline just how little hard evidence actually exists to assess fully the impact that Ligozzi's naturalist work had on the iconography of *pietra dura* artefacts.

Ligozzi and Florentine *pietra dura* manufacture: questions of authorship

Given the absence of designs originating from Ligozzi's later career with the Medici Grand Dukes, the following analysis will focus on the body of works the artist produced during his service for Francesco I de' Medici as a possible source of inspiration in the production of Florentine hardstone objects. Given the ready availability of the rich visual resource provided by Ligozzi's detailed zoological and botanical paintings, it would be surprising if this material was ignored by the makers of hardstone artefacts, however, whilst it is highly likely that the makers of hardstone objects looked to these zoological and botanical paintings as a storehouse for ideas, it is unlikely that their intention was to translate the images in a literal sense. On the contrary, it will be shown that practical and aesthetic considerations intrinsic to the manufacture of *pietra dura* inlay (*commesso*), as well as the importance of the materiality of stone as an medium of artistic expression, often played a far more significant role in the desired visual effect than did faithful adherence to the pictorial model. Evidence also suggests that the designers and stonecutters, when devising the iconography of particular hardstone artefacts made varied and eclectic use of

the rich resource of zoological and botanical illustrations in the Medici's collection, and they often constructed their designs from various primary visual sources created by different practitioners.

A case in point is the tabletop now in the *Galleria Palatina*, Palazzo Pitti in Florence, which, as has already been noted, offers the clearest evidence that Ligozzi's zoological and botanical painting were used as visual templates in the production of *pietra dura* objects. The tabletop was made from two matching panels that were created between 1604 and 1610 and were originally conceived as altar frontals for the Chapel of the Medici Princes at the church of San Lorenzo in Florence.[479] According to Annamaria Giusti it was Bernardino Poccetti (1548-1612) who designed the intricate iconographic programme for the pendent panels, and his complex composition drew on a range of naturalist images made by different makers. The two long-tailed exotic birds in the lower registers of the two panels, for example, are clearly based on Ligozzi's depictions of a Paradise bird and a pin-tailed whydah and an eastern paradise whydah (Figs. 140a-d).[480] As noted by Tongiorgi Tomasi, the spectacular orange-crowned *Fritillaria imperialis*, a flower native to Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, too, can be ascribed to a botanical illustration created by Ligozzi, whereas the red-tinted cardinal birds are based on a painting by Daniel Fröschel (1563-1613), who was another painter of naturalist subjects working for Francesco I (Figs. 143a-b).[481] Although the birds in the *pietra dura* panels are easily identifiable with those painted by Ligozzi, they appear flat and somewhat schematic in form, and it has clearly not been possible to replicate in stone the exact colours, the subtly rendered modulations of light and shade and the closely observed details of Ligozzi's depicted plumage and other anatomical distinctions. Nevertheless, the connections between Ligozzi's zoological and botanical illustrations and the *pietra dura* motifs is beyond dispute, and this factor may have contributed to the general assumption that other animal

[479] For details on the provenance and transformation from altar panel to table see *Splendori di Pietre Dure: L'Arte di Corte nella Firenze dei Granduchi* (exhib.cat.), ed. by Annamaria Giusti, Firenze: Giunti, 1988, pp.10-23, p.108.
[480] The connection was already noted in Giusti, 1988, pp.10-23, p.108, as well as Gonzàlez-Palacios (see fn.466 above), though the latter actually illustrates the painting alongside the tabletop.
[481] GDSU, Jacopo Ligozzi, *Fritillaria imperialis*, 1943 ORN; Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.61; on Daniel Fröschel's activities at the Medici court see Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'Daniel Froeschl before Prague: his artistic activity in Tuscany at the Medici court', in *Prag um 1600: Beiträge zur Kunst und Kultur am Hofe Rudolfs II.*, ed. by Eliška Fučíková, Freren: Luca Verlag, 1988, pp.289-298.

and plant motifs can likewise be ascribed to Ligozzi, even when no firm connection to an original source can be established.

An example of this is a late seventeenth-century *pietra dura* plaque showing a *Parrot on a Branch of Pear Tree* (Fig. 144) whose design is generally linked to 'the enduring influence of Ligozzi'.[482] Although it is possible to note a vague resemblance between the bird depicted on the hardstone plaque and Ligozzi's painting of a *Ring-necked Parakeet on a Plumb Branch* (Fig. 145), the animation of the parrot, with its right wing raised as if it were about to fly off, is a curious anomaly to the strict profile format and inanimate poses Ligozzi usually adopted in the depiction of his zoological subjects. This suggests that an altogether different design, perhaps by another maker, may have been used, or if the motif on the plaque was indeed based on Ligozzi's image, that the designers and/or the stonecutters took a fair degree of liberty in their interpretation of the iconography, composition and colouring. A number of hardstone tabletops dating from the first quarter of the seventeenth century, each featuring as a central motif a parrot generically similar to the one portrayed in the stone plaque, have likewise been linked to Ligozzi (Figs. 146-150).[483] Although it is possible that these represented adapted forms of Ligozzi's painted ring-necked parakeet, or perhaps his depiction of a blue and gold macaw (Fig. 109), there is no documentary evidence to confirm this. Decisions regarding the adaptation of particular preliminary designs are likely to have been influenced by practical and commercial considerations. Thus, the generic similarities in the iconography of the five tabletops offer clear evidence that the same basic visual model was used by the designers in the creation of several objects, but in each case the principal motifs were slightly altered, and perhaps tailored to the client's wishes, to make each individual artefact unique. Clearly, faithful imitation of the primary visual source was not a central concern for the makers of the hardstone objects, nor does it seem to have been important to portray an animal or plant as it appeared in life. This brings into question the notion that we are here dealing either with

[482] Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, pp.66-7; Giusti, 1996, p.30.
[483] See Baldini, Umberto, Annamaria Giusti, Annapaula Pampolini Martelli, *La Cappella dei Principi e le Pietre Dure a Firenze*, Milano : Electa, 1979, p.259, Plate 17; Gonzàles-Palacios, 1986, Vol. II, pp.103-5, Plates 169-171, Vol. 1, p.65; Gonzàles-Palacios, 1993, Vol.1, p.402, Vol. II, p.369, Plates 715-716; Colle, Enrico, Gonzàlez-Palacios and Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti: Il Periodo dei Medici 1537-1737*, Florence: Centro Di, Umberto Allemandi & C., 1996, pp.134-5, Plate 23.

'imitation' or with 'pure naturalism', as claimed by Giusti. Instead, it highlights that creating a 'unique' object in a way that was economically viable and practically possible to manufacture probably dictated the ways in which the painted designs were interpreted and adapted by the specialist stonecutters. This underlines the challenges involved in attempting to attribute the design of a particular *pietra dura* artefact to a named maker or a specific primary image, because as the artefacts discussed above have shown, paintings of fauna and flora provided a means to an end rather than an end in itself when it came to devising the iconography of hardstone works.

The iconography of Florentine *pietra dura* artefacts: Ligozzi's zoological illustrations as a source of inspiration

Aside from plants and flowers, birds and insects form the dominant subjects from the animal world in the iconography of the new-style naturalist-inspired *pietra dura* artefacts. Mammals, fish and other types of fauna rarely feature in hardstone objects. This reinforces the idea that birds, whether they were placed within the setting of the princely garden, or deployed as ornamental motifs in the artefacts produced by the princely workshops, were appreciated in large part for their decorative and aesthetic qualities. As we have seen, exotic birds formed a large proportion of the animals procured by the Medici Court, and rare avian subjects also feature in many of the illustrations produced by Ligozzi during his service for Francesco I de' Medici. However, the collection in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe also includes numerous sheets featuring many species of small European birds (Figs. 135a-c/151a-e/152a-c/153a-c). These ornithological works have been largely overlooked in the critical literature of the artist's oeuvre. Yet, I would argue that among Ligozzi's zoological illustrations these delicately rendered images of small native birds, which, to my knowledge, have never been published or considered in the context of *pietra dura* decoration, are likely to have made the biggest impact on the iconography of hardstone decorative artefacts and items of furniture. Particularly so, because native birds feature more frequently as a subject in hardstone objects than exotic species, which is probably because the colouring of indigenous avian species matched more readily with locally-sourced hardstone. Among the most fascinating objects produced by the Grand-

ducal workshops, in terms of ornithological subjects, is a tabletop dating from the early to mid-seventeenth century, whose design features more than sixteen different species of birds that are scattered across a network of twisting branches in the foreground, including an owl with its prey in the centre, while the background shows a rural scene with a lake and mountain range (Figs. 154a-c). Although none of the avian motifs that feature on the table match up exactly with Ligozzi's painted birds, it would seem surprising if the rich visual resource provided by the artist's collection of ornithological prototypes were not in some way used as a reference, especially since most of birds are likewise depicted in profile view. The most obvious exception is an owl with its prey, which does bear a generic resemblance to the one painted by Ligozzi (Figs. 154d/155).

Similar bird motifs, together with flowers are a particular feature in the design and manufacture of collectors' *pietra dura* cabinets, which were a product the Grand-ducal court specialized in. Typically made from exotic hardwoods, such as African ebony, these modest-sized and intimate pieces of furniture were produced not just for the court's own consumption, or as diplomatic gifts to be given to other rulers, but they were also aimed at the grand tourist market, which underlines the commercial aspect of Florentine hardstone manufacture.[484] Collectors would often purchase the hardstone plaques separately and have the cabinets assembled and made in their native countries. Such appears to have been the case with John Evelyn, who purchased the nineteen plaques, mainly of birds and flowers, for his cabinet, now preserved at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, during his stay in Florence (Figs. 156a-c).[485] Similar seventeenth-century *pietra dura* decorated cabinets can be found in many other collections in Britain, including the cabinets formerly owned by Sir Arthur Gilbert, that are now on display at Somerset House in London (Figs. 157a-b/158a-b). Again it is possible that Ligozzi's zoological and botanical paintings may have served as a source of inspiration for the designers of the *pietra dura* panels. For example, the turquoise-coloured birds on one of the cabinets in the Gilbert Collection

[484] In relation to Ferdinando I de' Medici, Suzanne Butters notes several instances where cabinets (*studioli*) and writing boxes (*scrittoi*) were given away as gifts, and the Grand Duke would often match the appearance and materials of the object to its intended recipient. See Butters, (2007), 243-354.
[485] Massinelli, Anna Maria and Jeanette Hanisee Gabriel, *The Gilbert Collection Hardstones*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers in association with The Gilbert Collection, 2000, p.37; *The John Evelyn Cabinet*, (1644-46), Victoria and Albert Museum, London, British Galleries, Museum no. W.24:1 to 23-1977.

(Figs. 157a-b) bear a generic resemblance to the artist's African ring-necked parakeets, (Fig. 145), whereas the two birds perched on cherry branches in the bottom corners have tentatively been identified as Bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) or possibly northern European finches, akin to those painted by Ligozzi (Figs. 152b-c).[486] However, even if Ligozzi's ornithological illustrations were used, neither the colouration nor the anatomical details were replicated in the *pietra dura* plaques. Instead, it seems that several basic profile templates of birds and plants were used in the manufacture of these hardstone plaques, but the method of filling in these uniform shapes with differently coloured and patterned stones helped to create variety and interest. This indicates that practical issues relating to the medium of *pietra dura*, as well as aesthetic considerations, appear to have had a greater impact on how the design was interpreted than considerations of mimetic verisimilitude.

Aesthetic considerations in Florentine *pietra dura* production

The technical complexities involved in adapting painted designs to the medium of hardstone have been considered above, in addition to these, aesthetic considerations intrinsic to *commesso* inlay, as well as issues relating to the very materiality of stone as a creative medium, played a crucial role in the design and look of the object. Thus, among the most distinctive features of *pietra dura* artefacts and furniture is that their design was typically centred on classical ideals of compositional symmetry, colour harmony and iconographical balance. This meant that images were often repeated, as in the identical pendent panels designed for the Chapel of the Princes at San Lorenzo (Fig. 140a), where the ability to create near-identical mirror images in stone may itself have signified technical virtuosity. Replication of motifs is a feature in all the works discussed above, including the cabinets, where symmetrical balance was established by inserting equally sized and spaced *pietra dura* plaques with identical mirroring imagery on either sides of the front-face of the pieces of furniture (Figs. 159a-b). In the slightly later cabinet from the Gilbert collection, this design strategy has been modified (Figs. 158a-b). Although the overall compositional equilibrium of the sixteen lateral panels on either side of the cabinet's front has been

[486] Massinelli, 2000, p. 33.

retained by alternating floral and bird motifs, the formal rigidity is disrupted by using differently coloured stones, thus adding another level of interest. Such aesthetic considerations clearly overrode strict adherence to an existing pictorial model or mimetic truthfulness when it came to representing zoological and botanical subjects. In terms of materials, the art historian and biographer, Filippo Baldinucci (1625-1696), pointed out the most basic distinction between the painted work and that produced in stone in his comments that, even the most excellent *commesso* craftsman cannot overcome the limitations of the hardstone material, since he cannot mix one with another to make a third colour to his own desire, as the painter does, but he is bound by the colour of the stone as nature has rendered it.[487] Nevertheless, it is clear that those responsible for selecting stones took great pains to choose stones that were best suited to the context. For example, Giuseppe Antonio Torricelli (1662-1719) in his *Treatise on pietre dure and pietre tenere as worked in the Gallery of his Royal Highness and in the chapel of San Lorenzo* (1714), wrote that the red, white and blue agates from the Pyrenees were 'invaluable for making flowers', while Agostino del Riccio (1541-1597) devoted an entire chapter of his *Istoria delle Pietre* (1597) to 'Delle Pietre che si trovano nell' animali & nelli huomini' (Of Stones that are found in (or suitable for) animals & in humans').[488] Painters were also involved in the selection of stones to ensure that the colours and textures were appropriate to the subject depicted. Ligozzi was himself responsible for picking out the lapis lazuli, jaspers, agate, and chalcedony and other stones used for the *Tabletop with Scattered Flowers* made to his design.[489] The Medici were renown for the vast collection of semi-precious hardstone they had amassed from diverse parts of Italy, Europe, Africa and Asia, which ensured that artists and craftsmen had a plentiful supply of material and a wide range of colours and

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[487] '[...] Resta sempre all'ottimo commettitore la necessità di condurre suo lavoro (dentro a' termini del possibile) alla somiglianza del vero, quanto sappia fare la pittura istessa; ma non può egli altrimenti disfare la sua materia, nè confondere l'uno con l' altro colore di essa per farne un terzo colore a modo suo, ma gli è d'uopo il valersi del colore della sua pietra, tale quale appunto il formò la natura.' Baldinucci, Filippo (1625-1696), *Notizie dei Professori del Disegno da Cimabue in qua: per le quali si dimostra come, e per chi le belle Arti di Pittura, Scultura e Architettura, Lasciata la Rozzezza delle Maniere Greca e Gotica, si siano in Questi Secoli ridotte all' Antica loro Perfezione: Opera Distinta in Secoli e Secennali, a cura di F. Ranalli*, 7 Vols, Firenze: S.P.E.S., 1974-1975, Vol.3, p.219.

[488] Parts of Giuseppe Antonio Torricelli's *Treatise* are reproduced in translated form in 'Appendix C, Techniques' in Masselini, 2000, pp.219-225, p.223; Del Riccio, Agostino, *Istoria delle Pietre*, ed. by Paola Barocchi, Florence: Studio per edizione scelte, 1979, cc.95r.-103r.

[489] See Colle, Enrico (ed.) and Gonzàlez-Palacios, Alvar, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti: Il Periodo dei Medici 1537-1737*, Florence: Centro Di: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1996, pp.132-3, Plate 22.

patterns to choose from.[490] More varied raw materials clearly helped in the endeavour to achieve a greater naturalism in *pietra dura* production, but the medium of stone itself and the artifice with which it could be manipulated evidently became as important as the iconography. Thus, what the hardstone palette lacked in flexibility to match the painterly illusionism of the original painted designs it more than gained in the jewel-like brilliance of the colours and textural variations that could be obtained from polished stones. Indeed, I would argue that in the *pietra dura* artefact the attention had shifted away from the object being portrayed and toward an ever-greater appreciation for the material used to represent it; in other words, an emphasis on luxurious materiality became the defining value of the new decorative naturalism. The subjects of nature, whether bird or flower, native or foreign, were thus being brought into a new relationship, one in which novelty, the unexpected and the beautiful came together to create a product that was extravagant and eminently desirable. It did not seem to matter whether the zoological and botanical subject portrayed was common or rare, since the incongruous juxtaposition of nature's fragile and ephemeral forms, so artfully rendered in the immutable and eternal medium of stone, was in itself sufficiently novel to impress.

Conclusion

It seems unlikely that the designers and makers of hardstone objects would have ignored the rich visual resource provided by the body of zoological and botanical paintings Ligozzi created for the Medici patrons. However, it is rarely possible to establish conclusive and unambiguous links between specific examples of Ligozzi's pictures and particular *pietra dura* artefacts. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that the designers of *pietra dura* objects intended to interpret zoological and botanical illustrations in a literal sense, or that they wanted to portray animals in a life-like manner. In any case, the medium of stone would have made that task near impossible. This ultimately limits our ability to assess accurately the true impact Ligozzi's naturalist work had on Florentine hardstone art.

[490] For information on the varieties and origins of stones available to *commesso* artists, see 'Appendix B: Materials' and 'Appendix C: Techniques' in Masselini, 2000, pp.215-225; and Pampaloni-Martelli, Annapaula, 'Le Raccolte Lapidee dell' Opificio delle Pietre Dure', in *Splendori di Pietre Dure: L'Arte di Corte nella Firenze dei Granduchi* (exhib.cat.) ed. by Annamaria Giusti, Firenze: Giunti, 1988, pp.268-75.

The attempt to attribute *pietra dura* objects to a named designer misses the point that such artefacts were created in a process of collaboration, relying on various craft skills, and according to an ethos whereby ideas for the final product were pooled from a variety of visual sources. In the *pietra dura* object, technical and aesthetic considerations, together with a shift towards a deeper appreciation for the material qualities of the medium into which the natural subject could be transformed, meant that scientific naturalism, as exemplified in Ligozzi's zoological and botanical illustration, had evidently given way to a product that in its sensuous qualities appealed to the senses rather than the intellect. This also points to a gradual shift in the Medici's interests in animals at that time. Although in the new *pietra dura* product Ferdinando I and Cosimo II were still associating animal images with the Tuscan court's wider aspirations, now it was the crafted object that signified Medici status and Florentine creativity, not necessarily the depicted animals themselves. Images of animals, in the context of hardstone artefacts, were used not in a political sense, to signify the Medici's diplomatic connections, or as a reflection of the Medici court's patronage of Ulisse Aldrovandi's *Natural History*. Instead, the Medici's appreciation for rare and out of the ordinary things was mediated through the aestheticized qualities of the precious materials themselves, and the 'ingenious artifice' with which even the most recognizable living organisms could be crafted into extraordinary symbols of Florentine artistry. Thus, by encouraging a more naturalistic style in hardstone manufacture, Ferdinando I and his successors cleverly turned the contemporary interests in natural history and the fascination with nature's curious life-forms to commercial advantage.

The examination of Jacopo Ligozzi's contribution to Aldrovandi's *Natural History* and Ferdinando's new-look *pietra dura* product has revealed that different criteria applied when it came to the 'translation' of the artist's zoological illustrations to these two very different contexts and media. The process of adapting Ligozzi's animal paintings to the production of the prints in Aldrovandi's scholarly work, involved precision and accurate copying skills to preserve the integrity and mimetic qualities of the primary image as well as the essence of the species portrayed. Even though the depicted animals were not always examined from life and the illustrations received by Aldrovandi appear to have been mainly

copies of Ligozzi's original works, their reproduction in print in Aldrovandi's *Natural History* made a significant contribution to the naturalist's cataloguing project and more broadly to the advancement of human knowledge about nature's fauna. In the context of adapting Ligozzi's zoological illustrations to the seemingly incongruous medium of hardstone, craftsmen appear to have taken a more creative and eclectic approach in their interpretation of the Ligozzi's images. This was partly due to the differences in media and also because practical and aesthetic considerations intrinsic to the *pietra dura* medium itself seemed to be of greater importance than the literal translation of the primary visual material or the life-like depiction of animals and plants. In the context of their 'translation' to stone, Ligozzi's paintings of animals and plants served to inspire rather than dictate the look of the final product. Moreover, the collaborative effort in the case of hardstone artefacts was geared to the production of objects that were commercially successful and capable of advertising the creative supremacy of the Grand-ducal workshops. Both contexts have raised important issues concerning artistic practices, ideas about authorship and originality and other matters relating to zoological illustrations and their relationship with the 'real' thing. Above all, the approach of discussing Ligozzi's zoological illustrations from the dual perspectives of their influence on early modern naturalism and on the manufacture of *pietra dura* artefacts, which in the available scholarship are normally discussed separately, has allowed me to highlight the intriguing tensions that existed between scientific naturalism and decorative naturalism.

CHAPTER 5

The zoological paintings created by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati for the Villa Medici Villa Medici Ambrogiana: a veritable painted menagerie or an inventory of a regime in decline?

Introduction

In previous chapters I have shown how rare animals, both real and depicted species, were deployed by various members of the Medici family to signify diverse aspects of their political ambitions and, ultimately, to establish their credentials as a fully recognized court. This chapter will focus on a series of zoological paintings that were commissioned by the last two Medici Grand Dukes, Cosimo III and Gian Gastone de' Medici, to examine the changes that took place in the way animals were used and depicted in Medici commissioned art towards the very end of the family's two-hundred year reign of Florence and the Tuscan state. It was Cosimo III who initiated the creation of a set of animal 'portraits' to be displayed at his favourite villa Ambrogiana; his son and successor, Gian Gastone de' Medici, was to commission further works and thus made his own unique contribution to the collection of zoological paintings. The Ambrogiana paintings were part of Cosimo III's much larger iconographic programme to decorate the family's country residences with complementary series of paintings portraying the fauna and flora represented in the Medici's zoological and botanical collections. This was undoubtedly an ambitious undertaking, yet the project was geared towards the Grand Duke's personal gratification and the enjoyment of a largely private, familial and select courtly audience. That is to say, this was not, therefore, a venture designed to promote the Medici family's cultural credentials to a wider international audience, as had been the case with the earlier Medici artistic endeavours. In scope, purpose and visibility, the undertaking appears to have been retrospective and inward-looking and generally lacking in the energy and drive that was shown by Cosimo I's shrewd use of animals as symbols of his political aspirations, Francesco I's generous sponsorship of a key scholarly work in natural philosophy, and Ferdinando I's and Cosimo II's daring commercial exploitation of the naturalist images created by Ligozzi and others. Cosimo III's wish to create a visual catalogue and inventory of the Medici's zoological and botanical possessions and his son's continuation of the project can be seen in two contradictory ways. On the one hand, it may be reflective of a

regime that was supremely confident and secure of its own place in history, and therefore no longer needed to prove itself on the world's political and cultural stage. On the other hand, the project may also signify an implicit awareness by the two remaining members of the Medici family that their dynastic survival was under threat and that their long reign was coming to an end - a realization which may have prompted them to take stock of their past, and to leave behind a body of work that confirmed to posterity their reputation as great collectors of nature's rare and precious bounty. I will argue that the Ambrogiana series of zoological paintings provides evidence for both of these interpretations.

Scholarship on the Ambrogiana zoological works has tended to focus primarily on establishing the provenance of the paintings and on the relationship between the pictures and the documents that refer to them in the Medici archive. The available published material on the paintings has therefore tended to be fairly similar and issues that the works raise, while being noted, have not been considered in depth - this chapter seeks to address some of the issues that I have identified. On a basic level, the Ambrogiana paintings produced by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati share a common endeavour in their aim to record in visual form the rare fauna in the Medici's collection. However, they also demonstrate further significant shifts in the depiction and pictorial conceptualization of animals in the art commissioned by the Florentine ruling family. In exploring these changes, the present analysis will seek to enhance our understanding of the Ambrogiana collection of animal paintings. The works are examined from several different thematic perspectives. One of these is Cosimo III's apparent fascination with the grotesque and 'freakish' in nature, an interest that is reflected in Bimbi's portrayal of so-called 'monstrous' animals with birth defects. I will propose that although these paintings demonstrate a continuing curiosity in scientific naturalism, they also indicate that notions of the exotic had shifted and that, by the start of the eighteenth century, creatures that in some bizarre and extraordinary way deviated from the norm became as worthy of being recorded in paint as the unfamiliar animals imported from distant lands. Another important theme that arises from the Ambrogiana series is the reliance on dead animals as models for images. The use of cartouches and inscriptions in the work of both painters confirm that a considerable proportion of the Ambrogiana paintings had been portrayed from stuffed and

mounted exhibits rather than living species. This issue will be linked to significant developments in the science of taxidermy, which made it possible to maintain the bodies of animals in seemingly life-like poses for much longer periods than had hitherto been possible, and this in turn affected the way painters portrayed the animal protagonists in their pictures. Lastly, the Ambrogiana collection will be examined in relation to wider artistic trends that influenced the depiction of Bimbi's and Scacciati's animal subjects, and I will consider how the two artists' differing approaches reflected the particular tastes and priorities of the two last Medici rulers. In the case of Bimbi, there is a discernible tension between scientific naturalism, the landscape backdrop and still-life painting, which connects with Cosimo III's well-documented appreciation for northern European art. In Pietro Neri Scacciati's work, produced under Gian Gastone, mimetic naturalism seems to have given way to allegory and satire, which signifies that within elite society, rare and unusual creatures were beginning to lose the ability to engender curiosity and wonder.

Cosimo III's painted menagerie: classification project and inventory

Cosimo III is said to have lived on a vegetarian diet, disliked hunting and evidently took 'pleasure in assembling everything that he could of the myriad Products of Nature', and, as such, he clearly shared his ancestors' deep pleasure in and fascination for animals.[491] Cosimo III's interests in rare and unusual fauna were expressed not just in his collecting activities and in his building of an additional menagerie in Boboli gardens as discussed in Chapters one and two, but also in his commissioning of a series of animal 'portraits', to be installed in his favourite country residence - the family villa Ambrogiana at Montelupo Fiorentino, near Empoli (Figs. 160-161).[492] The following excerpt from the naturalist Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti's (1712-1783), *Relazioni d'alcuni viaggi fatte in diverse parti della Toscana, per osservare le produzioni naturali e gli antichi monumenti d'essa* (Florence,1751-1754), records the author's impressions of the paintings he observed at the Ambrogiana:

> Osservazioni fatte all'Ambrogiana.
> Domenica 30. Settembre [1742]. Nella Regia Villa dell'Ambrogiana, osservai tra gli altri preziosi Arredi, moltissimi Quadri, ne'quali sono effigiate al naturale centinaia

[491] Mosco, 1985 (p.18);Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti quoted in Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.89.
[492] Mosco, 1985 (p.18).

> di rarissime specie d'Animali, si volatili che Quadrupedi. Tra questi sono due *Mostri di Vitella*, ed uno di *Pecora*, ciascuno con due capi, colla memoria del quando, e dove nacquero, e quanto vissero. Oltre agli Animali, vi sono i ritratti di alcuni Frutti di grandezza insolita, e mostruosa. Tutti questi Quadri fatti fare dalla Gloriosa Memoria del Gran-Duca *Cosimo III*, formano una raccolta pregiabilissima in Istoria Naturale, perchè sono di mano del famoso Pittore Andrea Scacciati, e di Pietro Neri suo figlio, e successore nella Carica di Direttore dei lavori di Pietre commesse della Real Gallería, ed anche del Celebre Fiorista Bartolommeo di Niccolò del Bimbo, o Bimbi da Settignano. Gli Animali poi sono rappresentati con tanta maestría ed esattezza, che sembrano vivi.[493]

Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti's observations were made some two decades after Cosimo III's death and he praised the Ambrogiana series of zoological paintings as a scheme that, in its ambition and scope, made a worthy contribution to Natural History and one that would preserve the 'Glorious Memory' of the commissioner, Grand-Duke Cosimo III. Interestingly, Gian Gastone de' Medici's contribution to the project received no credit from the naturalist. We shall return to the possible reasons for his exclusion from Targioni Tozzetti's appraisal below, here, however, I want to underline that the joint enterprise and differing priorities that shaped the contributions made to the decorative programme by these two rulers offers a relevant case study to explore the important issue of how attitudes towards animals changed during the reigns of these two Medici Grand Dukes. As noted by Targioni Tozzetti, at the heart of the collection of zoological paintings displayed at the villa Ambrogiana, was Cosimo III's evident commitment to use images as a way of enhancing human understanding about natural history and the animal world. Crucially, what is not noted in the passage cited above, but needs to be underlined, is that this assessment was likely to have been informed by the fact that the animal pictures were part of Cosimo III's much wider artistic endeavour to decorate the family's country villas with complementary

[493] (Observations made at Ambrogiana.
Sunday 30. September [1742]. At the Regal Villa Ambrogiana I observed among other precious Furnishings, many Paintings, consisting of about a hundred naturalistically rendered species of rare animals, birds and quadrupeds. Among these two Monstrous Calves, and a Sheep, each one with two heads, together with an inscription recording when and where they were born and how long they lived. Other than Animals, there were also painted some Fruit, extraordinarily large, and monstrous. All of these Paintings were made in the Glorious Memory of Grand-Duke Cosimo III, they form a worthy collection in Natural History, because they are by the hand of the famous Painter Andrea Scacciati, and of Pietro Nero, his son, and successor of the Directorship of the works of inlaid Hardstone at the *Real Galleria*, and also of the Celebrated Flower painter Bartolommeo [sic] of Niccolò del Bimbo, or [otherwise known as] Bimbi of Settignano. The Animals moreover are represented with great mastery and exactitude, so that they seem as if they were alive.), Targioni Tozzetti, 1751-54, Vol.1, 1751, p.32.

series of painting celebrating nature's rare and sometimes bizarre species of fauna and flora. Accordingly, while the Ambrogiana became a showcase for zoological subjects, the villa Castello was to house floral works, whereas paintings of fruit and vegetables were exhibited at the villa Topaia, and botanical 'monsters of nature' were displayed at the Medici's villa at Careggi.[494] The iconographic programme was thus designed to incorporate the entirety of the natural world into an integrated and yet clearly demarcated and ordered scheme. Recorded in the Targioni Tozzetti excerpt are the identities of the three artists responsible for creating the Ambrogiana works. However, in contradiction to Targioni Tozzetti's prioritization of the named painters, recent scholarship, based on firm evidence from the Medici archives, now attributes to Bartolomeo Bimbi (1648-1729) the majority of the zoological paintings, as well as many of the botanical and floral works commissioned by Cosimo III for his other country estates. Andrea Scacciati (1642-1710) specialised mainly in flower paintings and his contribution to the Ambrogiana collection *per se* appears to have been negligible. Andrea's son, Pietro Neri Scacciati (second half of seventeenth century-1749), who was working under the patronage of Gian Gastone, contributed several canvases showing unusual and rare animals to the villa Ambrogiana series. In the present context it is therefore the zoological works produced by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Nero Scacciati that concern us, though where appropriate brief reference to works from the other Medici villas will be necessary, in order to consider their relationship to the scheme as a whole.

Biographical details on Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati

Francesco Saverio Baldinucci's (1663-1738) biography of Bartolomeo Bimbi was written shortly before the artist's death on 14 January 1729 and provides a fairly detailed account of the artist's life and work.[495] Bimbi was born on 15 May 1648, in Settignano, a village some two miles from Florence, and in around 1661 he began his training in the workshop of the renowned Florentine painter Lorenzo Lippi (1606-1665), where he remained until his master's death four years later. Afterwards, he continued his studies with

[494] Mosco, 1985, p.18; and Chiarini, Marco, 'Horticulture as Art', in *Botanica come arte: dipinti dalle collezioni medicee: Villa medicea di Poggio a Caiano*, (exhib. cat.) a cura della Soprintendenza per i beni artistici e storici e della Soprintendenza per i beni ambientali e architettonici di Firenze e Pistoia, Firenze: Centro Di, 1990, pp.1-2.
[495] Baldinucci, 1975, pp.239-53.

Onorio Marinari (1627-1715).[496] Bimbi's association with the Medici seems to have begun when the artist was invited to accompany Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici (son of Cosimo II, 1617-1675) to Rome, to attend the Papal conclave, which led to the election on 29 April 1670, of Pope Clement X (Emilio Altieri, 1590-1676). During this sojourn, Bimbi met the famous Roman painter Mario Nuzzi (1603-1673), better known as Mario dei Fiori on account of his dramatic and brightly coloured flower compositions, and who, under the influence of the Flemish painter Daniel Seghers (1590-1661), became a chief protagonist in the development of Roman High Baroque still-life painting.[497] This was significant, because although Silvia Meloni Trkulja and Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi claim that Bimbi was not particularly influenced by dei Fiori, it was shortly after Bimbi's return from Rome that, according to Baldinucci, he painted the *Garland of Flowers* (Fig. 162) that evidently earned the artist a place at the Medici Court.[498] Bimbi began his career at the Medici court as painter to Cosimo III's son, Grand Prince Ferdinando (1663-1713), an appointment that was to lead to Cosimo III's commissioning of numerous still-life paintings and 'portraits' of 'beautiful, rare and extravagant flowers, fruit and animals'. [499]

Bimbi's role as court painter to Cosimo III can thus be seen as analogous to that of Jacopo Ligozzi, for both created works that documented in pictorial form the flora and fauna in the Medici's collection. Marilena Mosco speculates that Bimbi began to produce his studies of animals in around 1677, when the Boboli menagerie and Francesco Redi's (1626-1697) scientific laboratory at the Villa Ambrogiana were both constructed.[500] However, contemporary *Guardaroba Medicea* inventories, together with evidence from Baldinucci, confirm that the Ambrogiana paintings of birds and quadrupeds mostly date later, that is from the first three decades of the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, Mosco's reference to Redi's so-called *Gabinetto d'Istoria Naturale*, where the renowned naturalist, distinguished man of letters and court physician to Cosimo III de' Medici conducted his

[496] Little is known about Bimbi's career following his training, nor about the types of works he specialized in. Baldinucci's description of the artist as a practitioner who merely copied the work of others seems somewhat implausible, since this would hardly have earned the artist the kind of reputation necessary to earn him a place at the Grand-ducal court, Baldinucci, 1975, pp.239-41.
[497] Baldinucci, 1975, pp.240-241; Spike, John T., *Italian Still Life Paintings from three Centuries*, Florence: Centro Di; New York: National Academy of Design : Old Masters Exhibition Society, 1983, p.16
[498] Meloni Trkulja, 1998, p.8; Baldinucci, 1975, pp.241-2.
[499] Baldinucci, 1975, pp.241-2.
[500] Mosco, 1985 (p.19).

scientific experiments and anatomical dissections on animals, is noteworthy, for it serves as an important pointer to the cultural climate nurtured at the court of the penultimate Medici Grand Duke.[501] Unlike Francesco I's 'arms-length' involvement with Ulisse Aldrovandi's project, discussed in the previous chapter, Cosimo III's policy was to have Redi's scientific work conducted in-house, and this work resulted in some important scientific publications.[502] This confirms that contrary to the standard view promoted by Harold Acton, who claimed that under Cosimo III 'Florence ceased to be the rendezvous of scientist and scholars', the Medici court was not only taking a more direct and leading role in the promotion and patronage of natural philosophy, but that it continued to attract respected scientists.[503] The important point to take from this is that the same scientific ethos that gave rise to Redi's naturalist work also informed Bimbi's approach to the depiction of zoological paintings, as will be shown below.

In contrast to Bimbi's life and work, which is relatively well documented, very little information exists on the work and career of Pietro Neri Scacciati. Indeed, even his date of birth remains a mystery. What we do know about Pietro Neri is summarized by Maria Matilde Simari. From the archival evidence she has unearthed, it seems that Pietro Neri matriculated from the *Academia del Disegno* in January 1715, and that some time after this, presumably on account of his father's contacts with the Medici, he began to receive commissions from the Medici court. Pietro Neri was evidently held in high regard by Gian Gastone de' Medici, for in around 1732 he was made Director of Works of the *Pietre Commesse della Real Galleria* and three years later he obtained the prestigious post of Superintendent of the Gallery, a position he held until 1737.[504] The artist's involvement in the Ambrogiana project is first documented in January 1731, eight years after the death of

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[501] Hubert, Hans W., '"Cosmic Delight": Bartolomeo Bimbi and the Representation of Nature at the Court of Cosimo III de' Medici', in *The Art of Natural History: Illustrated Treatises and Botanical Paintings, 1400-1850*, ed. by Therese O'Malley and Amy R.W. Meyers, Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2008, pp.205-225 (p.205).

[502] *Osservazioni intorno alle vipere* (Florence, 1664), *Esperienze intorno alla generazione degl'insetti* (Florence, 1668) and *Esperienze intorno diverse cose naturali, e particolarmente a quelle che ci sono portate dall'Indie* (Florence,1671). On Francesco Redi's scientific work and publications see Bernardi, Walter and Luigi Guerrini (eds), *Francesco Redi, Un Protagonista della Scienza Moderna: Documenti, Esperimenti*, Immagini, Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1999.

[503] Acton, Harold, *The Last Medici*, London: Sphere Books Ltd., 1988 (reprint), p.154.

[504] Pietro Neri's death, in December 1749, is recorded in the *Libro dei morti* of 1750-1759, for archival references see Simari, 1985, p.71.

Cosimo III and two years after Bimbi's death, when an archival record names him as the author of four paintings destined for the villa Ambrogiana (see Appendix 15).[505] A further six works attributed to the artist are listed in later Ambrogiana documents and three other works have yet to be linked to specific archival sources (see Appendix 16).[506] Thus, Pietro Neri's contribution to the Ambrogiana series of zoological works, although not as large as that made by Bimbi, was nevertheless substantial and significant.

'Monstrous' and marvellous accidents of nature: a new sub-category of the 'exotic'

Cosimo III's evident curiosity about natural phenomena and his interests and support of the study of natural sciences, as displayed in Redi's project, also informs the series of paintings of natural subjects which the Grand Duke commissioned for his country villas, and in particular Bartolomeo Bimbi's contributions to that project. The most obvious expression of this is the very separation of fauna and flora pictures in the different villas, which is suggestive of an attempt broadly to classify and categorize the natural world. A similar scientific ethos is also reflected in Bimbi's pictorial treatment of animals and plants. Akin to Ligozzi, Bimbi lavished much care and attention on the precise and detailed depiction of the animal's surface appearance and anatomical details. However, Bimbi's work differed from that of his predecessor in several important aspects. Firstly, his animal 'portraits' were painted in oil and on a much larger scale than Ligozzi's zoological illustrations. Secondly, he frequently portrayed species from multiple viewpoints to allow the viewer to imagine the subject in the round (Fig. 163), and, lastly, his animal protagonists were always portrayed within a landscape setting. These latter characteristics effectively added another dimension to naturalist painting and represented a new development from the works we have considered in previous chapters. Also novel was the introduction of painted legends that were used to provide written information about the depicted natural subjects, which further indicates that the works had a purpose that went beyond the purely aesthetic. The use of cartouches as an educational and classificatory tool is particular prevalent in Bimbi's paintings of fruit, in which the combination of image and text clearly fulfilled the purpose of documenting the different varieties of fruit grown in the

[505] ASF, Guardaroba Medicea, 1343, cc.107v.-108r.
[506] ASF, Guardaroba Medicea, 1384, cc.84 r.-v.; ASF, Guardaroba Medicea, 1350, cc.142r.-v.

Grand-ducal territories. An illustrative example is his large canvas depicting some 115 species of pears, which are grouped according to the month in which they mature, and each different variety is carefully numbered and correspondingly identified on a legend placed beneath the painted fruit (Fig. 164).[507] Labels also feature in a few of Bimbi's zoological paintings. In this context they were typically used to provide details on when and where the depicted species was found and to explain the physical characteristics that made the animal especially noteworthy. Three works showing animals born with birth-defects fall into this category and the cartouches included in these pictures offer fairly detailed information about the animals' anatomical abnormalities. The legend included in the portrait of the two-headed lamb will serve as an example of the written descriptions that accompanied each animal portrait (Figs. 165a-b). It reads as follows:

> Nacque il di 20 Febb:o 1720 ad In:e in Giovedi a tre/ ore e mezzo di notte, in un podere della Prio:ia di S. Ange/lo a Bibbione, il presente Agnello bianco maraviglioso/ non solo per Ie due Teste, e due Colli con i suoi Esofaghi, / mà ancora per 1'interiora, che aveva tenendo due Polmo/ni, due Fegati, due Milze, due Cuori, raddoppiati i/ Ventricoli, e gl'Intestini, i quali andavano poi a terminare in un solo. Aveva due soli Lombi, et una sola / Vescica.[508]

Similarly detailed information is also provided in cartouches of the two paintings of conjoined calves (Figs. 166-167). The specificity of the anatomical details indicates that the written information clearly relied on insights obtained from dissections, and it is likely that detailed post-mortem examinations of the depicted creatures were carried out at the *Gabinetto d'Istoria Naturale* by the court anatomist. Indeed, it is known that dissecting as a scientific pursuit was particularly encouraged at the Medici court, and the Danish anatomist and naturalist, Niels Stensen (Niccolò Stenone, 1638-1686), who worked alongside Redi in his scientific laboratory, was described to have devoted his time to 'dissecting every day and making wonderful observations around the court in Florence'.[509] This is yet another indication that during Cosimo III's reign much scientific research work was conducted in-

[507] Hubert, 2008 (p.207).
[508] 'Born on 20 February 1720, Thursday at three-thirty at night, on a farm in the district of S. Angelo a Bibbione, the present white Lamb is marvellous not just on account of having two Heads, and two Necks each with its Oesophagus, but also because of its internal organs, consisting of two Lungs, two Livers, two Spleens, two Hearts, double Stomachs and Intestines, which then terminate in one. It has only two Loins [presumably meaning two front and two hind legs], and only one Bladder', transcribed in Casciu, 2009, p.142.
[509] Findlen, 1996, p.219.

house and Stensen's work for the Medici did much to promote the study of anatomy as a courtly practice. Bimbi's painted labels, in their educational and documentary role to elucidate and support the visual evidence of the painted animals' physical abnormalities, reflected the spirit of these anatomical experiments in a very tangible way. The cartouches also highlight that Bimbi's 'portraits' of malformed animals had a purpose that went beyond the purely superficial and voyeuristic; instead these works can be connected to a higher enlightenment ideal: that of wanting to understand the natural world through a process of hands-on investigation. Indeed, during the early decades of the eighteenth century – the very time in which Bimbi's paintings were created - a prevalent idea had emerged, which held that the anatomical investigation of 'monsters' could, by contrast, provide much information about the functions of normal organisms; in other words, accidental and 'imperfect' life-forms were deemed to hold the key to the discovery of nature's hidden mysteries. This was certainly the view expressed by Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, who, in 1703, when commenting on the malformed foetus of a lamb, wrote that,

> One commonly regards monsters as jests of nature, ...but philosophers are quite persuaded that nature does not play, that she always inviolably follows the same rules, and that all her works are... equally serious. There may be extraordinary ones among them, but not irregular ones; and it is even often the most extraordinary, which give the most opening to discover the general rules which comprehend all of them.[510]

Merry Wiesner-Hanks, in her study of the 'hairy' Gonzales sisters, who suffered from the rare genetic abnormality '*hypertrichosis universalis*', makes a similar case, for she notes that abnormal people, while popularly being regarded as both 'human and monstrous', also prompted more positive ideals amid the learned classes, because their study was envisaged to lead to improvements in human understanding about the workings of living organism.[511]

It seems significant that out of the hundred or so zoological works displayed at the villa, Targioni Tozzetti should single out the 'Monstrous' calves and sheep for special reference, because it suggests that such 'bizzarri aborti della natura' ('bizarre miscarriages

[510] Fontenelle quoted in Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150-1750*, New York: Zone Books, 2001, pp.205-6.
[511] Wiesner-Hanks, Merry E., *The Marvelous Hairy Girls: The Gonzales Sisters and their World*, New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009, pp.9-10.

of nature'), to quote the words of Bimbi's biographer, Francesco Saverio Baldinucci, were creatures that seem to have held a peculiar fascination to the early modern observer.[512] Curiosity about the bizarre and the accidental in nature seems to have been a peculiarity of the age. However, Grand Duke Cosimo III appears to have had a special interest in unusual living organisms or so-called 'freaks' of nature, because in addition to the zoological 'oddities' noted above, Bimbi was also asked to paint several portraits of horticultural 'monstrosities' that were deemed noteworthy on account of their bizarre shape, or extraordinary size or weight. Examples include a *Monstrous Cauliflower and Horseradish* (1706) and a giant *Squash from the Grand-ducal Garden at Pisa* (1711), the latter weighing some '160 librae' (pounds) (Fig. 168).[513] Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park have argued that in early modern discourse, so-called 'monstrous births', whether human or animal, inspired contrasting reactions of repugnance and wonder. Those who subscribed to the former sentiment tended to explain their distaste on the grounds that such imperfect life-forms challenged and undermined the immutable perfection and regularity of the laws God had imposed upon created nature.[514] This is certainly the view expressed by the sixteenth-century Florentine writer and philosopher, Benedetto Varchi, who described monsters as a "foul and guilty thing" and attributed to them all the "errors and sins of whoever makes them".[515] That such polarized views about 'monstrous births' remained prevalent even during eighteenth century is indicated in the language commentators used to describe the calves and lamb depicted in Bimbi's three paintings. Targioni Tozzetti's and Francesco Baldinucci, as we noted, described the animals as 'monstrous' and 'miscarriages of nature', which accords with the commonly-held view that malformed beings violated normative standards.[516] Bimbi, in contrast, in the cartouche of his painting of the conjoined lamb, chose the word 'maraviglioso' (marvellous) to describe the animal. Both the expression and the tender way in which the artist portrayed the unfortunate creature reveal a sense of

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[512] Baldinucci, 1975, p.247.
[513] Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, pp.99-100, cat.64-65; Francesco Baldinucci notes other examples of nature's peculiar oddities, Baldinucci, 1975, (p. 250); in relation to horticultural oddities, see in particular Casciu, Stefano e Chiara Nepi [at al], *Stravaganti e Bizzarri : Ortaggi e Frutti Dipinti da Bartolomeo Bimbi per i Medici*, Firenze: Edifir Edizioni, 2008.
[514] Daston, 2001, pp.202-03.
[515] Varchi quoted in Daston, 2001, p.201.
[516] Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150-1750*, New York: Zone Books, 2001, p.202.

wonderment and compassion that nature could create such a flawed yet miraculous being. Cosimo III, the commissioner of Bimbi's animal paintings, seems to have appraised such creatures in similarly benign terms. This is implied by the fact that in the Grand Duke's cabinet of zoological wonders, at the villa Ambrogiana, Bimbi's 'portraits' of two-headed calves and a conjoined lamb were hung alongside those of 'other-world' fauna, thus imbuing the disfigured animals with a status equal to that of more exotic foreign species. Clearly the curiosity-value attached to 'monstrous' beings meant that by the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century the bizarre and sometimes grotesque accidents of nature had caught the imagination as much as did the rare and uncommon imports of fauna and flora from distant continents. Indeed, given the marked gravitation towards life-forms that distinguished themselves by their anatomical peculiarity and spectacularity, we seem to be witnessing the first signs of a normalization process whereby the more 'commonly' encountered species of exotic fauna in the zoological gardens of the European elite were beginning to lose their ability to cause wonder and curiosity, because the people who possessed them had grown accustomed to their presence. The theme will be picked up again later when we come to consider the possible meaning of the zoological paintings Pietro Neri Scacciati created for Gian Gastone.

The Ambrogiana series of animal paintings and developments in taxidermy

The painted legends included in some of Bimbi's zoological works, and more particularly so the inscriptions in Pietro Neri Scacciati's paintings, make it clear that the animals depicted were frequently painted from dead and taxidermied specimens. In the case of Bimbi, examples include his two paintings of black-crowned night-herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), both of which had been portrayed from birds that had become trapped and killed in trees in the San Marco district of Florence. In both paintings, the birds are depicted from two viewing positions and arranged in aesthetically pleasing formations that are designed to present the avian subject in diverse but complementary attitudes. The first exemplar, according to the inscription written in red paint in the left-hand bottom corner of the picture, was 'found dead in the 'Giardino de' Semplici' on a plane tree on 25 March

1719' (Fig. 169).[517] According to the archival documents, the painting was completed within twenty-three days and arrived at the framing workshop of Francesco Guasconti on 17 April 1719, and was subsequently installed at the villa Ambrogiana eleven days later. [518] This was a remarkable turnaround and confirms that the bird was painted shortly after it was found, and probably before it was stuffed and mounted. This assumption is supported by the visual evidence, thus in his portrayal of the first heron, the bird found in the 'Giardino de' Semplici', the lower specimen is shown on its back, which makes it obvious that the bird is dead, whereas the heron above is shown upright, as if it were still alive, though this impression is betrayed by the curiously angular placement of the feet, which suggests that the bird's life-less body was probably propped-up into an upright position while it was being painted. Moreover, both the condition of the depicted bird(s), especially the seeming freshness of the plumage, as well as the very short time (under a month) that had elapsed between finding the creature and the completion of the painting, implies that the heron found in the 'Giardino de' Semplici' was probably painted within hours or days of its discovery. This brings into question the suggestion made by Silvia Mascalchi that the unfortunate creature was embalmed prior to being painted.[519]

Another heron, the subject of the second painting, was evidently discovered in a fig tree in the kitchen garden of the convent of Santissima Annunziata, in 1720 (Fig. 170).[520] The work is listed in the same archival document as the first heron picture and is recorded to have been received by Guasconti on 23 Maggio 1720.[521] This later work again portrays the bird from two different viewing positions, however, in this picture is possible that the bird found earlier (in March 1719) may have been stuffed sometime after it had been painted and that its image was included in Bimbi's second heron 'portrait'. My reasoning

[517] 'Quest'uccello si chiama Guacco / fu morto in Firenze nel Giardino de' Semplici sopra un Platano / il di 25 marzo 1719.' Inscription transcribed in Ciascu, 2009, p.134.
[518] According to archival records Bimbi's painting arrived at the framer on 17 April 1719, and was received by the Guardaroba of the Ambrogiana on 28 April 1719, ASF Guardaroba Medicea 1260 bis, cc.71v. and 74 r.
[519] The author suggests that depiction occurred after embalming 'sequenza nel processo di imbalsamazione e della successiva rappresentazione pittorica', see Silvia Mascalchi's description of Bimbi's *Guacco del Giardino dei Semplici in due vedute*, Casciu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.134.
[520] 'Specie di Guacco/Ammazzato nell'Orto de' Padri/ della Nunziata, sopra/un Fico/1720'. Inscription transcribed in Ciascu, 2009, p.136.
[521] ASF Guardaroba Medicea, 1260 (*Giornale di Guardaroba, 1717-1721*), c.115v.

for this proposition is based on the slight variations in the dark and light markings around the eyes of the two birds, which points to the likelihood that Bimbi's second picture was probably composed of two different herons: the one above representing the taxidermied bird found in 1719, and the one below the specimen found in 1720. Whatever the truth or otherwise of this speculation, what seems incontrovertible, and is fundamental to my argument, is that the fresh appearance of the plumage, the well preserved colouring and relative plumpness of the avian subjects represented by Bimbi points to the strong likelihood that we are dealing here with birds that had died fairly recently, and if preserved, had been in this state for no longer than a year. This, as I will show, was a crucial factor in the qualitative differences between Bimbi's and Pietro Neri's portrayal of animals.

Unlike Bimbi's pictures, Pietro Neri Scacciati's zoological work relied almost exclusively on taxidermied and mounted specimens; this is confirmed both by the information provided in his painted inscriptions and by the archival documents describing his works, as well as by the paintings themselves. Pietro Neri's painted legends are generally brief, in some cases barely legible and are principally used for the purpose of identifying all or some of the species represented. In a number of instances, labels also indicate when the animal entered the Medici's zoological collection and/or when it had died. His painting of *Exotic and European Birds* (1731) is a typical example (Fig. 171).[522] The avian species depicted in the work are labelled as follows: 'GRANOCHAIA'; 'GALLINA VENNE DA BOLOGNA 1687'; 'CAUSALE DETTO LORINO PORTATO DA UN TALE DETTO SCOT (...) NEL 169(...) MORTO IN BOBOLI NEL 1700'.[523] The identifying inscriptions tally with the written documentation from the Medici Guardaroba archive (see Appendix 15), which also confirms the identity of the painter and the receipt, on 30th January 1731, of the completed work:

> Da Pietro Neri Scacciati = ...dipintovi al naturale ...un Uccello grande con Collo celeste e rosso nominate Causale; detto Lorino, e sopra un masso vi è una Gallina, che venne di Bologna L'anno 1687 con occhio rosso, e corna in testa, et à pie di un albero un Uccello chiamato Granocchia bianca, con becco nero, e sopra un tronco di

[522] The birds represented include a southern cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius*), a curious hen with curly plumage, a white 'Forielo' (unidentified) and a little egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Ciascu, 2009, p.360.
[523] 'A Heron, a Hen arrived from Bologna in 1687, a Cassowary called Lorino given by a certain Scott...in 169[?] died in the Boboli in 1700', inscription transcribed in Cascui, 2009, p.360, and translated in Mosco, 1985, p.72.

esso vi è un altro Uccello chiamato Forielo con veduta di Paese.[524]

A later record, in another register entitled *Giornale della Guardaroba 1729-1736*, repeats more or less the same information as the first, but states that on 16 May 1731 the work had been dispatched by the framer, Francesco Guasconti, to the villa Ambrogiana, where it was installed in the *Salone Grande a Terreno*.[525] From the chronological timetable established by the painted 'labels' and the two archival documents, it becomes clear that at least two of the ornithological specimens represented in the painting had died a considerable period before they were depicted by the artist. The southern cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius*), a flightless bird imported from Australia and Papua New Guinea, had died in 1700, within the first ten years of its arrival in the Boboli zoo. In today's captive conditions, southern cassowary can live some '20 to 40 years', which suggests that this is yet another example to illustrate that in the early-modern era the survival of birds and mammals imported from distant continents was likely to be very short, and that therefore taxidermic preservation was often the only 'longer-term' means of enjoying rarely seen animals beyond their living condition.[526] Quite why the curious curly-plumaged hen, identified as 'GALLINA [che] VENNE DA BOLOGNA 1687', that features in the same painting, should have been visually recorded or indeed stuffed is a mystery. It was probably one of the more bizarre products of an experimentation in crossbreeding, and was in all likelihood given as a gift to Cosimo III, who himself had a keen interest in developing the kinds of unusual breeds of poultry that frequently form the subject of Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati's paintings (Figs. 172-174).[527] This suggests that the extraordinary hybrid offspring that resulted from human intervention into poultry reproduction may be classed as yet another category of the exotic. More significant, however, is the fact that the hen's identifying 'label' allows us to conjecture that taxidermy must have been practiced at the Medici court since at least the

[524] 'From Pietro Neri Scacciati = ...painted from nature ... a big Bird with a blue and red Neck identified as a Cassowary; called Lorino, and on top of a rock is a hen which came from Bologna in the year of 1687, with a red eye and horned head feathers and, at the foot of a tree, a white Bird with a black beak called an 'Granocchia' (an egret), and above it on a branch another Bird called a Forielo with a landscape view', entry '30 Gennaio 1731', ASF, GM, 1343, cc.l07v.-108r.
[525] 'Great hall on the ground floor', entry '16 May 1731', ASF G.M, 1351, cc.39r.-v.; its location is recorded in ASF, G.M., 1392, c. 17r.; G.M., Appendice, 92, c.24r.
[526] Hulbert, D.and A. Fraser. 2007, 'Casuarius casuarius', University of Michigan Museum of Zoology Animal Diversity Web, http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Casuarius_casuarius.html.[20/09/2010].
[527] Simari, 1985, (p.28).

1680s or early 90s (or earlier) given that the life-span of a chicken ranges between three to eight years. Moreover, the techniques used must have been fairly sophisticated, since the preserved species evidently survived in their taxidermied state for some considerable time (forty to thirty years in the case of the 'Gallina' and three decades for the southern cassowary). Indeed, the collection of the Museum of Zoology and Natural History in Florence, known as *La Specola*, to this day houses a stuffed 'hippopotamus that had apparently entered the Medici's zoological collection some time during the second half of the 17th century' (Fig. 175).[528] The young hippopotamus was probably given as a gift to Ferdinando II or to Cosimo III, and, based on Liv Thorsen's suggestion that its size indicates that the animal had not yet reached full maturity, it probably meant that the animal (like the cassowary) did not survive its captivity for very long. The author remarks on the 'clumsy execution of the stuffing and mounting', which took the form of filling the skin with plaster whereas the cranium itself was reconstructed using wood and plaster. False teeth (probably made from wood and then painted) were then inserted into its gaping jaw and the mouth was painted red, for a more striking effect. The website of *La Specola* further notes that the taxidermist had evidently never seen a hippo's feet, which explains why he reconstructed them akin to those of a dog. [529] In spite of these anatomical errors and the lack of sophistication in the 're-construction' of the animal's body, the fact that the mounted beast has survived more or less intact for such a long period seems all the more remarkable. The example also clearly highlights the fact that preservation techniques were at a very early stage of development and still largely experimental. To set this within the context of contemporary practices of taxidermy, it is worth at this stage briefly to consider the methods used - especially in avian taxidermy - since these are the subjects most often painted by Bimbi and Scacciati, and to determine the general durability of stuffed and mounted specimens.

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[528] The website of the Museum of Natural History (*La Specola*) in Florence, http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/museum_of_natural_history.html# [18/09/2010].

[529] Thorsen, Liv, E.,'The Hippopotamus in Florentine Zoological Museum "La Specola": A discussion of Stuffed Animals as Sources of Cultural History', in *Museologia Scientifica*, Vol. 21, No.2, 2004 (2006), 269-281, (pp.271/277); and additional information from the website of the Museum of Natural History (*La Specola*) in Florence, http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/museum_of_natural_history.html# [18/09/2010].

According to Karl Schulze-Hagen [et al], the use of stuffed birds as decoys in hunting was discussed as early as the thirteenth century, in works such as the Emperor Friedrich II of Hohenstaufen's (1194-1250) treatise on falconry *De Arte Venandi cum Avibus* (*The Art of Hunting with Birds*, written before 1248). [530] However, the practical function of the stuffed birds suggests that only rudimentary preservation techniques would have been required. Avian and mammalian taxidermy used for scientific purposes seems to have originated in the sixteenth century, but the practice was not widespread before the seventeenth century. Both the desire to preserve zoological specimens and the production of more detailed 'scientific' guides on taxidermic methods, coincided with the expansion of world trade and the rising fashion among the European elite to establish cabinets of curiosities.[531] Thus, it was not until the mid-sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries that more sophisticated taxidermic techniques were being written about and developed for the longer-term preservation of zoological exhibits, particularly ornithological specimens, which collectors began to gather for their cabinet collections (Fig. 176).[532] The earliest instructions appeared in Pierre Belon's *L'Histoire de la Nature des Oyseaux, avec leurs Descriptions & Naifs Portraits Retirez du Naturel* (Paris,1555), and advocated a form of embalming technique based on removing the bird's innards, sprinkling the skin with salt and hanging it up by its feet to dry.[533] More detailed manuals, which set out more advanced taxidermic processes that are still valid today, were published three-quarters of a century later by Giovanni Pietro Olina in his *Uccelliera overo discorso della natura, e proprietà di diversi uccelli, e in particolare dique' che cantano con il modo di prendergli, conoscergli, allevargli, e mantenergli,* (Rome, 1622), and Johann Conrad Aitinger's *Kurtzer Vnd Einfeltiger bericht Von Dem Vogelstellen,* (Kassel, 1626/31), and others.[534] The preservation methods advocated by these two authors were fairly similar and generally

[530] This piece of information and the rest of this brief summary on taxidermic methods are based on the following two key articles that deal with the development of early-modern avian taxidermy: Schulze-Hagen, Karl [et al], 'Avian taxidermy in Europe from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance', *Journal of Ornithology*, Vol. 144, No. 4 (2003), 459-478 (p.459); and Faber, Paul L., 'The Development of Taxidermy and the History of Ornithology', *Isis*, Vol. 68, No.4 (1977), 550-566.
[531] Schulze-Hagen, 2003, (p.462).
[532] Anthony Shelton notes that the trend for cabinets of curiosities began to flourish from 'c. 1550' and lasted until the mid-seventeenth century, Shelton, Anthony A., 'Cabinets of Transgression: Renaissance Collections and the Incorporation of the New World', in J. Elsner and R. Cardinal (eds.), *The Cultures of Collecting,* London: Reaktion Books, 1994, pp.177-203 (p.180).
[533] Schulze-Hagen, 2003, (pp. 459/471).
[534] Schulze-Hagen, 2003, (p. 459).

represented the main techniques used at the time.[535] Olina suggested 'opening the skin at the neck, continuing the incision along the back to the upper tail. Subcutaneous fat and any remaining flesh ... should be scraped off, a false body made of filling material (*babagia*) soaked in alcohol (*assentio*), and the wings and legs shaped using copper wire.' Aitinger in contrast, proposed opening the body near the legs, after which

> [...] the entire skin with tail, legs, wings, and head is peeled from the body, the flesh of the legs and wings is removed, the eyes are enucleated, the cranium opened and the brain extracted. ...Following this, ash, sulphur and alum are spread in the "wing holes", eye sockets, cranium, and over the whole skin. A "corpus" is made of a bundle of straw or hay corresponding to the proportions of the bird and the skin fitted over this artificial body, using skewers of wood or wires to give stability to wings, legs and tail.... To protect against moths and maggots the skin should be dried in an oven "every quarter-year".[536]

While such measures prevented the immediate deterioration of dead birds, whether they were transported back to Europe from faraway places or prepared to become exhibits in the collector's cabinet, none of these techniques were entirely successful in preserving the zoological exhibit for more than a few years, nor in maintaining the visual integrity of the living 'thing'. This was because the substances and techniques used by taxidermists had in themselves deteriorating effects. Thus, salt and alum, for example, caused the bird's skin to disintegrate. Contact with alcohol damaged the feathers and distorted the flesh, whereas heat from the oven made the plumage brittle and dull.[537] The biggest obstacle to long-term preservation, however, was damage caused by insects. This problem was eventually solved, firstly, by enclosing zoological exhibits in well-sealed glass cases, and, secondly, and more crucially, by the introduction of powdered arsenic. '[W]hite arsenicum', as a medium to prevent insect damage, was used as early as the 1680s, and its first mention occurs in a German text, published in 1682, though the technique became more widely used only from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.[538]

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[535] For a brief summary of the main taxidermist techniques used, see Faber, 1977, (pp.552-3).
[536] Schulze-Hagen, 2003 (p.471).
[537] Faber, 1977 (p.553).
[538] The use of 'white arsenicum' was first recommended in Wolfgang Helmherd Freiherr von Hohberg's (1612-1688) *Georgica curiosa* [*Noble Country*] (1682), but its use was popularized by Jean-Baptiste Bécoeur (1718-1777), see Schulze-Hagen, 2003, (pp.472-3); and Faber, 1977 (p.559).

Birds were clearly more fragile and delicate creatures to preserve than a hippopotamus, and during Bimbi and Scacciati's time these appear to have fared less well in terms of longer-term 'survival'. Nevertheless, as the examples of the cassowary and the curly-feathered hen demonstrate, the Medici's taxidermist(s) had a fair degree of success, and is likely that they used one or a combination of the approaches outlined above to stuff and mount the ornithological exhibits destined for the Medici's collection. As has been noted in Chapter one, Gaetano Cambiagi's *Descrizione dell' Imperiale Giardino di Boboli* made mention of an entire room that was set aside at the Boboli menagerie for the display of 'stuffed' animals, which, as he claimed, were arranged to look as though they were still alive. [539] It is highly likely that the hen and cassowary as well as numerous other birds in Pietro Neri's paintings formed part of the Boboli zoo's collection of taxidermied exhibits. Indeed, from the painted inscriptions in Pietro Neri's other zoological works, and from the archival documents relating to these, it becomes clear that the majority of his avian subjects were in fact based on taxidermied specimens, which means that the room of stuffed beasts at the Boboli menagerie probably provided the artist with most of his source material. In addition to the endeavour to preserve the dead animal itself, it seems feasible that the more important stuffed exhibits were accompanied with some form of written documentation in the form of labels that provided contextual information about the animal's former existence, what species it represented, when and by what means it entered the Medici's collection, when it died and so on. This would explain where Scacciati obtained the information when it came to identifying the species in his paintings and why he included the details in the first place. The fact that the same information was then replicated in the documents relating to each painted work clearly underlines the Medici's objective to preserve, in one form or another, a record of the fauna that had once formed part of their collection. Or to put it another way, animals were being preserved in stuffed form, catalogued in visual form and documented in written inventories.

These archival records are particularly helpful in identifying species in Scacciati's work where the painted information is no longer legible and, as we have seen in the case of

[539] 'In uno di questi [spartimenti] molti di essi animali già morti, quali feccati e ripieni appariscono nell'istessa form, come si vivi fostero' ('in one of these [rooms or comparmnets] many of these animals are already dead, they are made and stuffed to appear as though they were still alive'), Cambiagi, 1757, p.62.

the work discussed earlier, in establishing a chronological relationship between the depicted avian subjects and the date of the work. For example, the following description - taken from the same ledger as the one that lists the painting of the hen and cassowary - refers to a work that has hitherto only tentatively been attributed to Pietro Neri Scacciati, but whose iconography, in my view, matches one of the four works the artist completed in January 1731 (Fig. 177).

> [...] e nel altro vi è Paese, con veduta d'un fiume dipintoui un Aquila Sciotta presa in Val al Elsa: un Arione preso a Pisa L'Anno 1697: un Corvo marino con penne verde e petto rosso, preso a Livorno l'Anno 1709 = con diversi altri uccelli di più colori; [...].[540]

The archival evidence again helps us to determine how long the depicted birds had been dead before they were painted. The documents suggest that the noted avian specimens had been 'taken' (I presume this to mean that they were found dead, or had been trapped or killed during hunting) from different locations and, at least in two cases, some twelve years apart; yet in the painting they are arranged in the same pictorial context (i.e. placed in the same time and place). Clearly this painting, too, was composed mostly from stuffed and mounted exhibits. The curious, tableau-like arrangement of the four birds in Scacciati's painting brings to mind the possibility that the depicted species were actually stuffed, mounted and exhibited in this or a similar formation at the room for stuffed animals in Boboli menagerie. Indeed, Cambiagi's comment that the animals were preserved as they appeared in life makes this more likely, because it allows us to imagine that the taxidermied exhibits were arranged in specific poses and attitudes, and perhaps in small groups that implied a certain narrative reading. In the context of Scacciati's painting, the aim was perhaps to show the mighty power and ruthlessness of the large hunting bird (eagle), which surveys with seeming triumph the unfortunate avian prey laid out at its feet. It is arguable that Bimbi's depiction of a flamingo and an arctic fox was likewise mounted in the arbitrary, artificial and tableau-like formation in which the artist depicted them (Fig. 178). The room for stuffed animals at the Boboli menagerie and the mode of displaying the

[540] 'And in the other there is a Landscape, with a view and a River depicted an Eagle (Scottish ?) taken in the Val al Elsa; a Heron taken at Pisa in the Year 1697: a marine Raven with green feathers and a red chest, taken at Livorno in the Year 1709 = with diverse other birds in many colours', ASF Guardaroba Medicea, 1351, c.39 v.; the painting is also listed in the following document, which names Pietro Neri Scacciati as its creator, ASF Guardaroba Medicea, 1343, c.108 r.

zoological exhibits can thus be said to have foreshadowed the natural history museums that began to be established during the eighteenth century.[541] Moreover, the fact that the inscriptions and the archival documents do not hide the fact that Scacciati was basing his depicted animals on long-dead exhibits suggests that the practice of using stuffed exhibits as models for painting was becoming more commonplace.

As Cambiagi noted, taxidermied animals were arranged as near to life as possible, and the taxidermic techniques outlined by Olina and Aitinger above have shown that by the end of the seventeenth century methods had advanced sufficiently to preserve the bodies of birds over longer periods.[542] At the same time, ingenious methods were developed that allowed avian specimens to be prepared and mounted into all sorts of convincingly animated and lifelike configurations. Thus, a dead bird's inert and floppy wings, neck and head could be fixed in place with the aid of brass and iron wires. Straw and other filling materials were used to recreate the former shape of the animal, while artificial wooden breastbones provided solidity and support to the chest and lower body. Similarly, eyes were replaced with shiny beads and the feet and bill were varnished to give them a fresh and glossy appearance.[543] In theory, these measures were designed to disguise the signs of death and decay, and should have made it possible for the skilled painter to render even preserved animals in a relatively naturalistic fashion. Yet, Pietro Neri has been accused of lacking the acute observational skills and scientific approach that underpinned Bimbi's naturalist painting, and his critics have seen this as reflecting a shift away from the mimetic tradition in zoological painting towards a representational mode based on 'superficiality', 'fantasy' and 'decoration'.[544] There is undeniably an element of truth in this; especially when one considers Bimbi's evident commitment to documenting the zoological subject in the round and from close quarters, in contrast to Pietro Neri's preference for the depiction of several animals on each pictorial surface, which left little scope for close examination and detailed

[541] Paula Findlen locates the 'birth' of the natural history museum in the eighteenth century, Findlen, 1994, p.394.
[542] Louise E. Robbins notes that in mid-eighteenth-century France, the taxidermist, Mademoiselle Baudouin, claimed that her preparations guaranteed to preserve the stuffed natural history specimens for over fifty years, Robbins, 2002, pp.139/280, fn.50.
[543] Faber, 1977 (p.555).
[544] Casciu, 2009, p.363; Mosco, 1985 (p.19).

visual analysis. However, I would argue that Pietro Neri's supposed inferiority in the depiction of fur, feathers and other anatomical features, as well as the sometime unconvincingly rendered anatomies of his zoological subjects was not necessarily due to a lack of skills, but may have been due to the fact that the artist was working from taxidermied exhibits that were probably in a poor state of preservation. As has been noted above, damage caused by insects was a likely possibility with stuffed birds. It is also likely that the less familiar species of birds were poorly reconstructed by the taxidermist, so that in anatomical terms the stuffed avian exhibit no longer resembled the living thing. There are several tell-tell signs that confirm the validity of this argument. Returning to the picture of *Exotic and European Birds* (Fig. 171), it may be observed that the curvature of the cassowary's back in its living condition is usually far more rounded than the flattened shape in which Pietro Neri has depicted it (compare Figs. 179 a-b). Although it is possible that this anatomical anomaly was due to the painter's lack of observational skills, at is also just as likely that the taxidermists did not get the shape of the animal quite right, that the skin had shrunk over time, or that the stuffing inside had somehow compacted and collapsed inwards. The striking orange-to-red pigmented wattles at the front of the neck, too, are anatomically incorrect, since on the living bird they are typically much longer and free-swinging, while those in the painting look as though they are sewn to the neck. If my assumptions are correct, the 'imperfect' re-construction of a bird that most Europeans were (and still are) unfamiliar with, was hardly conducive to a life-like pictorial rendition. The little egret is even less convincing in anatomical terms, and it also appears to have been painted from a preserved specimen (Fig. 179c). This is indicated by the overly short and oddly-angled neck (probably resulting from shrinkage and/or poor support), as well as by the unrealistically shaped and mounted wings and the sparse and dull-looking plumage and brittle feathers (a likely consequence of insect infestation or possibly damage caused if the skin was dried in the hot oven). Again, it is highly likely that Pietro Neri simply portrayed the water-wading bird in the condition in which he found it in the room for stuffed animals at the Boboli. Other works feature species that commentators on Pietro Neri's work have found difficult to classify. An example of this is a painting entitled *Birds and a monkey in a landscape with flowers*, which features a red lorikeet, a little bustard, a monkey, a grey

crow and a large white bird that occupies the right side of the picture (Fig. 180).[545] This latter bird is identified in the painted inscription as a 'CICOGNA' ('stork'), yet its anatomy does not readily correspond to that of a stork or any other identifiable species known today.[546] In appearance, the peculiar 'CICOGNA', which I assume, died in '1727', seems to range somewhere in between a gray heron (as suggested by the long feet and upright body), or perhaps even an American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) given the distinctive yellow colouring that marks the bill and the area surrounding the bird's eyes (Figs. 181a-b). The indistinct nature of the bird reminds us that knowledge about exotic species was still incomplete and both the taxidermist (who had to reconstruct the animals after death) and the artists (who depicted them) probably had very little understanding of the anatomy of species that were unfamiliar to them. Moreover, we also have to take into account the strong likelihood that delicate exotic creatures developed diseases during their captivity, which again may explain anatomical peculiarities or inconsistencies.[547] For example, captive pelicans can develop problems with their gular pouches, because these are vulnerable to parasites and, in weakened birds, can lead to hemorrhagic ulcerative stomatitis.[548] This may account for the abnormal appendages that appear at the base of the gular pouch of what can more confidently identified with a pelican in another example of Pietro Neri's paintings (Fig. 182).[549] Besides such anatomical anomalies, there are other visual indications of physical deterioration, such as the clearly exposed feather base on the pelican's wing, which suggests that the bird had lost most of its wing feathers as well as the finer plumage underneath. Whether this occurred when the creature was alive or after it had died, is impossible to say, though these signs of wear and tear are among the 'clues' that

[545] The painting features a parrot (Red Lorikeet -*Eos rubra?*), a Little Bustard ? (*Tetrax tetrax*), a monkey (moustached monkey, *Cercopithecus cephus* ?), a grey crow (*Corvus coronae cornix*), a Gray heron ? (*Ardea cinerea*).
[546] Stefano Casciu has tentatively identified the 'cicogna as a 'trampoliere' ['wader'], see Casciu, 2009, p.364; while Marilena Mosco suggests that the bird may be imaginary, Mosco, 1985, p.76.
[547] Matthew Senior makes the point that physical restrictions, unsuitable conditions and feeding, led animals at the Versailles menagerie to develop confinement deformities and diseases, see Senior, Matthew, 'The Menagerie and the Labyrinth: Animals at Versailles, 1662-1792, in *Renaissance Beasts: Of Animals, and Other Wonderful Creatures*, ed. by Erica Fudge, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004, pp.208-32 (p.212).
[548] Overstreet, Robin M. and Stephen S. Currany, 'Parasites of the American White Pelican', *Gulf and Caribbean Research*, Vol 17 (2005), 31–48 (p.35).
[549] The birds have been identified as a heron (?), a Japanese pigeon (*Columba livia)*, a Crimson chat (*Epthianura tricolor?*), and a pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*), Casciu, 2009, p.364.

point towards the probability that a visual representation was based on a taxidermied ornithological subject.[550]

The staged and unrealistic poses of the animal protagonists, the seeming indifference to relationships of scale between the depicted species, as well as the arbitrary juxtapositions of birds (and less frequently mammals) that in the natural world would never have inhabited the same space, offer yet further evidence that Pietro Neri Scacciati was working from taxidermied specimens. Indeed, it is tempting to speculate that Scacciati's compositions were constructed by selecting three or four exhibits from among the Medici's collection of stuffed animals and painting them on the same pictorial surface, more or less as they appeared in their taxidermied state. This would certainly help to explain why each of the depicted species is rendered seemingly in its own distinctive mini-ecosystem, and why little regard has been paid to establish convincing relationships between the depicted animals and the natural environment into which they were set (see Figs. above). This suggests that recording the species in a visually unambiguous way was a higher priority than to portray them in naturalistic manner and setting. The evidence that Scacciati's animal paintings were based on stuffed specimens is thus fairly compelling, and this raises a number of questions. Firstly, why did Pietro Neri have to make do with 'old' and in some instances less than perfect taxidermied creatures, and what conclusions does this prompt regarding the state of the Medici's collection of living animals during the reign of Gian Gastone de' Medici? Secondly, why should the last surviving Medici ruler, Gian Gastone, have been content to have his court painter depict animals that in many instances had little direct association with him, but instead had belonged to his predecessor, and what does this tell us regarding Gian Gastone's collecting interests and attitude towards rare and exotic fauna? Lastly, when examined in relation to the ways in which his ancestors used animals to signify various aspects of their power, what might have been the motivations that prompted the works commissioned by Gian Gastone? To answer these questions we must turn to consider the different ways in which Bimbi and Pietro Neri contextualized the animals.

[550] Schulze-Hagen, 2003 (p.464).

Cosimo III's patronage of Bimbi's hybrid animal 'portraits': tensions between zoological naturalism, still-life and landscape painting

Bimbi, like his predecessor Ligozzi, typically reserved each canvas for the depiction of a single species and in the work of both artists animals are examined at close quarter and with great attention to anatomical and surface detail. However, in a number of key areas, Bimbi's Ambrogiana pictures also represent a significant development in the genre of animal painting. One important difference that has already been noted is Bimbi's frequent exploration of his subjects from different viewing positions, which allowed him to portray the animal in the round and/or in different attitudes. Another significant departure from Ligozzi's approach of observing animals in strict isolation was Bimbi's choice of depicting his animals within a landscape setting. Although this has meant that Bimbi's subjects had to compete for attention with the background elements, the landscape backdrops were sometimes used as an indication of the animal's preferred natural habitat, geographical origins or provenance.[551] Another distinction is the fact that Bimbi approached his animal 'portraits' from the position of a still-life painter - a factor which clearly determined the formal approach in which the species were portrayed. Bimbi's animal paintings thus blur the boundaries between pure scientific zoological naturalism (as exemplified by Ligozzi), landscape painting and the genre of still-life, and, as such, the zoological works demonstrated both a deep connection with earlier traditions of animal painting nurtured at the Medici court and a new approach. The argument that follows will consider how the hybrid animal paintings that Bartolomeo Bimbi created for his patron, Cosimo III, connected with and reflected the personal tastes and values of his Grand-ducal master.

Since Bimbi is typically described as a still-life painter, I will begin this section by considering the impact the genre had on his zoological paintings. Still-life painting has been defined as a type of painting that is concerned with the aesthetic juxtaposition and depiction of various inanimate objects; that is, '*nature in posa*', or nature posed and arranged in suspended animation.[552] This form of art lent itself to 'descriptive sedulity' and the deep

[551] Marilena Mosco observes that Bimbi, in his *Three views of a Chinese Golden Pheasant,* depicted a landscape that was suggestive of the bird's Chinese provenance, Mosco, 1985, p.42.
[552] Spike, John T., *Italian Still Life Paintings from three Centuries*, Florence: Centro Di; New York: National Academy of Design: Old Masters Exhibition Society, 1983, pp.11/14.

and penetrating pictorial scrutiny of natural and human-made objects.[553] This, and the fact that elements from the natural world, such as fruit, vegetables, flowers and animals often form the primary subjects of the genre, explains the close link that existed between the mimetic tradition of zoological and botanical naturalism and still-life painting. Indeed, one might regard the latter as a development of the former. It perhaps also explains why the popularity for still-life painting first emerged in parts of northern Europe, such as Holland, Flanders, France and Lombardy.[554] In Florence, under the patronage of the Medici the genre first gained popularity during the seventeenth century, especially under the Grand Dukedom of Ferdinando II de' Medici who is said to have been an enthusiastic collector of still-life paintings and actively encouraged local artists, such as Bartolomeo Ligozzi (nephew to Jacopo Ligozzi, active ca.1631/1639-1695), Agnolo Gori and Carlo Dolci, to direct their talents to the new artistic idiom.[555] Both the works of these artists and the genre itself continued to flourish under Ferdinando II's son and successor, Cosimo III, and the latter's own son, Grand Prince Ferdinando. Cosimo III was evidently a very cultured man and had visited many parts of Europe, including Austria, Germany and the Netherlands in 1667-1668, and a year later Spain, Portugal and London. He was therefore well acquainted with current fashions in European art.[556] His special interest appears to have been in Netherlandish painting, and he had apparently visited the studios of numerous artists during his sojourn and bought works by painters such as Frans van Mieris the Elder, Gerrit Dou and others.[557] Bimbi was undoubtedly able to study such works when he began working for the Medici court, though his first introduction to still-life painting, as we have seen, occurred during his stay in Rome, and back in Florence he found further inspiration in the work of local practitioners of the genre.[558]

The still-life pictures which Bartolomeo Ligozzi created for Grand Prince Ferdinando, who was also Bimbi's first Medici employer, have been noted as a significant

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[553] Roberto Longhi quoted in Spike, 1983, p.13.
[554] Spike, 1983, p.11.
[555] Casciu, 2009, p.232; Tongiorgi Tomasi, 2002, p.77; Meloni Trkulja, 1998, p.8.
[556] Strathern, Paul, *The Medici: Godfathers of the Renaissance,* London: Pimlico, 2005 (Paperback edition), p.387.
[557] Rolfi, Serenella, 'Il difetto di lontananza: appunti sui viaggi di Cosimo III de' Medici nel Nord Europa', *Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte*, Vol. 54 (1994), 53-68.
[558] Baldinucci, 1975, p.241; Spike, 1983, p.107; Meloni Trkulja, 1998, p.8.

influence on Bimbi's own work (Figs. 183-184).[559] As such, they provide a useful comparison with Bimbi's paintings to consider the extent to which the latter's approach conforms with and departs from formal conventions that governed the genre of still-life painting. The influences of the genre are probably most strongly evident in Bimbi's botanical and floral works (e.g. Figs. 162 and 164), however, the balanced and aesthetically pleasing way in which Bimbi composed and arranged his zoological subjects, especially in his paintings of game (Fig. 185), also meet with the principle of '*natura in posa*'. Even when painting supposedly 'living' species they are typically depicted in carefully posed 'frozen' animation, and in attitudes or 'actions' that befitted the animal's natural state: thus a bird might be shown in mid flight (Fig. 170), or poised with its dead prey (Fig. 177). However, in contrast to Bartolomeo Ligozzi's paintings in which small exotic animals are shown together with fruit and flowers, Bimbi rarely depicted his zoological subjects in this way; that is, as simply another element of the natural world. When fruit, nuts and other food items are included, as for example in his 'portrait' of a *Salmon-crested cockatoo* (Fig. 1) and his picture of a *Squirrel and a brown rat* (Fig. 186), these details more likely alluded to the creatures' captive condition as exotic Medici pets.[560] Moreover, in Bimbi's paintings the depicted animals invariably dominate the pictorial space, to make it clear that it is they who are the main focus of the picture. The landscape backdrops into which Bimbi's depicted animals are set serve an equally subservient role insofar as the natural settings are meant to somehow complement the species depicted. In his painting of a *Great horned owl and barn owl with their prey*, for example, the two birds are placed within a countryside scene lit by moonlight as an allusion of their nocturnal hunting habits (Fig. 187), whereas the Norwegian falcon, depicted in another picture, evidently captured its prey of two larks at dawn or dusk (Fig. 188), and a stream in his painting of *A seagull with an eel in its beak* serves to indicate that the bird's natural habitat and food-source is near water (Fig. 189). In this respect, Bimbi's pictures are more closely aligned with Netherlandish traditions of painting. The use of the landscape to provide contextual

[559] Casciu, 2009, p.232.
[560] Eastern gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*) originated from the New World, whereas Brown rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) were native to northern China, both species were introduced into Europe during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Sciurus_carolinensis.html [07/08/2009]
http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Rattus_norvegicus.html [07/08/2009].

information about the depicted species - their habitat, hunting habits, morphological characteristics etc. was first introduced in so-called 'paradise landscapes' by the Flemish painter Jan Brueghel the Elder I (1568-1625), who produced works in this genre for a host of Italian patrons (Fig. 190a).[561] It is not known whether Cosimo III visited the Antwerp studio of Brueghel's son, also called Jan Brueghel the Younger II (1601-1678), who likewise specialized in biblical and allegorical landscapes populated with domestic and exotic animals (Fig. 191), nor has it been possible to ascertain whether such paintings were represented in the Medici's art collection. However, the 'paradise or allegorical landscapes' produced by the Brueghel workshop were extremely popular among Italian collectors, especially among Roman cardinals, and it is more than likely that Bimbi encountered such works - perhaps during his stay in Rome - and that they may have influenced his use of the landscape setting as a reference to the animal's preferred habitat.[562] The convention of showing animals in pairs and from different viewing position, as for example the lions, leopards, monkeys, swans etc., in the foreground of Jan Brueghel the Elder's painting of *The Temptation of Adam and Eve* (Fig. 190b), may also have influenced Bimbi. Stylistically, however, Bimbi's natural backdrops are closer to the more fluid and loosely defined romanticising landscapes produced in Italy, than to the very detailed rural settings typical of Flemish 'paradise landscapes', and, more importantly, only one or two species are typically represented in Bimbi's pictures, in contrast to the multitude of creatures that inhabit the Brueghel team's 'paradise landscapes'. As a consequence, Bimbi's natural settings are never allowed to dominate the central subject of each painting: the meticulously rendered birds and mammals, which in Bimbi's work invariably take up most of the available pictorial space. These qualities are fundamental, because they helped to give unity and continuity to the Ambrogiana series as a whole, and, crucially, they demonstrate the Bimbi's firm commitment to the zoological naturalism practiced by artists working at the Medici court since the time of Francesco I.

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[561] Faber Kolb, Arianne, *Jan Brueghel the Elder: The Entry of the Animals into Noah's Ark*, Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005, pp.21-31.

[562] During his stay in Italy from ca.1592-96, Jan Brueghel the Elder I created numerous such works for Italian patrons, and examples of his 'paradise landscapes' and allegorical landscapes could be found in the collections of Cardinals Federico Borromeo and Camillo Pamphilj, see Faber Kolb, 2005, pp.47-52.

The identical black and gold frames that were used for the entire series of zoological paintings displayed on the first and second floors of the villa Ambrogiana helped to reinforce further the sense of cohesion across the Ambrogiana collection.[563] It also underlined the fact that while each painting could be read as a work of art in its own right, collectively, the series connected to the wider aims of Grand Duke Cosimo III to create a comprehensive visual catalogue and inventory of the zoological (as well as botanical) specimens represented in his possession. Moreover, the pictorial language by which this endeavour was given shape struck a carefully calibrated balance between works that might be described as naturalist illustrations, of the kind produced by Ligozzi, and paintings that can more readily be described as fine art. As such, the Ambrogiana represented a uniquely fitting tribute to the longest ruling member of the Medici dynasty, whose passion for collecting animals was expressed in so many different ways: he admired them in living form in his private gardens, and he ensured that their memory was preserved in stuffed and mounted form at the *Serraglio degli animali rari*, and finally he arranged for their display in painted form on the walls of his favourite country villa. Indeed, Targioni Tozzetti's assertion that Cosimo III's 'pleasure in assembling everything that he could of the myriad Products of Nature', is confirmed elsewhere, for it was also he who acquired one of the most renown and noteworthy collections of *naturalia* (sea-shells, crustaceans, invertebrates etc.) available at the time, the one belonging to Georg Eberhard Rumpf (1627-1702), which the Dutchman had amassed during his time on the East Indian island of Amboina. Cosimo III bought the collection in 1682, and Bimbi's *Still-life with shells* of ca.1713 is one of several works that celebrate the Medici's rich gathering of shells and other marine organisms (Fig. 192).[564] It is perhaps with shrewd foresight that these ephemeral things might one day be lost, that prompted Cosimo III to have his collection of fauna and flora recorded in series of paintings. While the objects provided him with endless pleasure during

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[563] Mosco, 1985, p.36.

[564] Targioni Tozzetti, Giovanni (1712-1783), *Catalogo delle produzioni naturali che si conservano nella Galleria Imperiale di Firenze, disteso nell'anno 1763 per ordine di Sua Eccellenza il Sig.r Mareschiallo Marchese Antoniotto Botta Adorno dal dottor Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti Deceano del Collegio Medico di Firenze, Professore pubblico di Botanica e Prefetto della Biblioteca Pubblica Magliabechiana*, 5 Vols, Unpublished manuscript: IMSS, Biblioteca Antica 2378, Digitized version of Vol. 1 *Animali e loro parti*, Prefazione, cc. 3-4, http://fermi.imss.fi.it/rd/bdv?/bdviewer/bid=000000302341&lng=en [23/11/2010]; Rumpf, Georg Eberhard, *D'Amboinsche Rariteitkamer / The Ambonese Curiosity Cabinet*, trans. and ed. by E.M. Beekman, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999.

his lifetime, he undoubtedly would have known that works of art, to which humankind attach a more enduring value, would more assuredly bear long-term witness to his rare and precious collection of natural treasures. Thus, while Cosimo III's project might have been less public-spirited than some of the ventures we have examined in previous case studies, the Ambrogiana series in conception and scope made a unique and significant contribution to the Medici's already substantial collection of animal paintings. Moreover, viewed in light of Cosimo III's wider cataloguing project, as represented by the series of botanical and floral works, as well as his patronage of natural philosophy (Francesco Redi's work) and his encouragement of anatomical research, it can be claimed that during the Grand Duke's fifty-three year reign the arts and the sciences continued to flourish in equal measure.

Gian Gastone's patronage of Pietro Neri Scacciati: animal satire as a critique of a regime in crisis

Cosimo III's second son, Gian Gastone, inherited the Tuscan throne in 1723, at the grand age of fifty-two. He has fared less well in the critical appraisal of modern-day historians. He is typically described as someone who had no ambitions, did not care for splendour, displayed no desire to impress and therefore lacked the artistic independence and connoisseurship of his father and his elder brother, Grand Prince Ferdinando de' Medici, whose premature death opened the way for Gian Gastone to become heir to the Tuscan throne. Indeed, by the time Gian Gastone assumed the office as head of state, he was generally considered to be 'prematurely senile, often drunk in public' and, on account of 'indolence and sloth', is said never to have 'dressed for the last thirteen years of his life, and ... never left his bed for the last eight'.[565] This pitiable assessment of the personality and cultural legacy of the last surviving male member of the Medici dynasty has been revised in a recent exhibition and publication entitled *Testimonianze e Scoperte Sull'ultimo Granduca De' Medici*, curated and edited by Monica Bietti. [566] Both the exhibition and the book represent an attempt to provide a more nuanced account of a man who was evidently

[565] Hibbert, 1979, pp.300/302; Acton, 1988, pp.308/314/318; Hale, 2004 (reprint), p.190.
[566] The publication is based on an exhibition of the same title staged at the Museo delle Cappelle Medicei, Florence, in 2008, Bietti, Monica (ed.), *Gian Gastone (1671-1737): Testimonianze e Scoperte Sull'ultimo Granduca De' Medic*i, Firenze: Firenze Musei, 2008.

well-travelled, spoke several languages, possessed shrewd diplomatic skills, was sympathetic to the arts and generally demonstrated a strong commitment to his people and his political duty.[567] From the collated research in this multi-author book also emerges a slightly more sympathetic (though ultimately no less damning) account as to why the Grand Duke in the latter years of his life rarely left his private apartment. Donatella Lippi observes that Gian Gastone's ability to perform his duties effectively was affected by various physical and mental health issues, most significantly of all his debilitating and life-long melancholia, which she states was exacerbated by his gambling and drinking.[568] Indeed nosographic analysis conducted and published during the 1920s, does indeed confirm that Gian Gastone, from roughly the age of sixty-two, suffered from dementia that was most probably caused by his alcohol addiction.[569] Thus, although accounts such as Harold Acton's (on whose narrative most subsequent descriptions are largely based), have clearly sensationalized and perhaps exaggerated Gian Gastone's failings and personal weaknesses, we nevertheless get a sense that Gian Gastone was physically, psychologically and intellectually frail and inept. More crucial still was Gian Gastone's inability to produce an heir, which threatened the very survival of the Medici family and their dynastic claim to the Tuscan throne. The short *résumé* of Gian Gastone's state of health and his personal weaknesses demonstrate that the last Medici Grand Duke's failings not only affected his ability to find pleasure and curiosity in animals *per se*, but that the darkly satirical and allegorical undertones in Pietro Neri Scacciati's animal paintings mirrored and foreshadowed the decline, decadence and ultimate demise of the regime that had dominated and eventually ruled the Florentine nation for nearly three centuries.

When compared to the ambitious nature of the projects we have considered thus far, each of which has paid testimony to the Medici's longstanding fascination with rare and

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[567] The information is taken from the official website announcing the exhibition of 16 July to 2 November 2008, Museum of Medici Chapels, Chapel of the Princes, *Gian Gastone (1671-1737): Discoveries and evidence about the last of the Medici Grand Dukes*, http://www.uffizi.firenze.it/english/mostre/mostra.asp?id=147 [15/11/2010].

[568] Lippi, Donatella, 'La Malattia di Gian Gastone: La Voce dei Documenti', in *Gian Gastone (1671-1737): Testimonianze e Scoperte Sull'ultimo Granduca De' Medic*i, ed. by Bietti, Monica [et al], Firenze: Firenze Musei, 2008, pp.141-148 (pp.142-4).

[569] Villari, Natale (et al), 'Primi risultati dalle indagini radiodiagnostiche', in *Gian Gastone (1671-1737): Testimonianze e Scoperte Sull'ultimo Granduca De' Medic*i, ed. by Bietti, Monica [et al], Firenze: Firenze Musei, 2008, pp.225-229 (p.229).

exotic beasts, Gian Gastone's decision to take on and continue a project that was started by his father hardly demonstrates a great deal of artistic individuality and flair. Nor, it seems, was he ambitious in his choice of painter, since Scacciati never achieved the kind of recognition Jacopo Ligozzi and Bartolomeo Bimbi had enjoyed; neither during his lifetime nor in the contemporary critical studies cited above. This too, is a harsh judgement. As I have already demonstrated, Scacciati's depiction of the animals was, in part at least, influenced by the state of preservation of his zoological models. It seems, however, that he may also have preferred a more creative approach to naturalism than had Ligozzi and Bimbi. Indeed, the fact that he was working from long-dead, and less than perfect stuffed specimens, as well as from animals that apparently had little direct connection to his patron, perhaps offered him greater freedom to interpret his subjects more imaginatively. Moreover, as well shall see, during the eighteenth century, attitudes towards animals both in elite circles and in wider society were beginning to change and this had important ramifications on the ways in which certain species were portrayed in art, literature and popular culture. Scacciati's zoological works reflected these changes insofar as some of his paintings display a strong satirical and allegorical element.

The most obvious example of this is Scacciati's *Allegorical scene with monkeys, parrots and a cat* (1733) (Fig. 193). The work is unusual among the artist's oeuvre in its overt and explicit satire.[570] Depicted on the right of the painting are two parrots; the one on the left represents a lawyer, he is shown in the act of presenting a written petition to a parrot-prior on his right. The latter is wearing a large pair of spectacles and is perched on a cage with an imprisoned cat inside. The prior's back is turned against the lawyer, and he only barely glances over his shoulder at the script on the parchment scroll, which reads 'Respectful Prior ...the poor pussy-cat, called Masquerader (Mascherino) having been examined as a thief now finds himself locked in a narrow cage with only an onion to eat, and craves mercy for his life'.[571] Evidently the plight of the imprisoned cat does not concern the prior. In the left foreground of the picture, we see a group of five well-dressed monkeys. Courtly in demure and clothing, they are partaking of a gluttonous feast of bread,

[570] The work's attribution to Pietro Neri Scacciati has been confirmed by Marilena Mosco on account that it has been autographed by the artist (with his initials 'PºS.ti.') and dated (1733), Mosco, 1985, p.74.
[571] Painted inscription transcribed in Mosco, 1985, p.74.

salami, wine and 'jasmine cordial'. Some of them look rather worse for wear, particularly the character on the far left, who is holding aloft an empty wine bottle and is trying to catch the last remaining drops of liquid on his tongue. Seated above them on a tree-branch, is another monkey, this time in female garb. She is shown gazing at her richly bejewelled and resplendently attired image in a mirror held up to her by two parrot servants. Before we consider the meaning of Pietro Neri's picture it is appropriate to reflect on the possible reasons for using animals, especially monkeys and parrots, in this satirical and anthropomorphising way.

Humans and monkeys were not linked to the same taxonomic species until the Swedish Naturalist Carl von Lineé (Carolus Linnaeus, 1707-1778) grouped them together in his *Systema Naturae* (Leiden, 1735). [572] However, even before that time, monkeys in art and literature were frequently associated with human behaviour and imitation, primarily because they share with *homo sapiens* certain anatomical and behavioural characteristics: they are able to walk in a semi-upright position and to grab things with their hand-like paws. This made them highly suited to being turned into objects of visual satire. Monkeys and apes first appeared in sixteenth-century religious art, especially in northern Europe, and in this context they were seen as an allegorical embodiment of human vice and sinfulness.[573] However, by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, images of monkeys, as an embodiment of the exotic pets of the elite, increasingly appeared as satirical emblems of human excess and sensory pleasures in the secular realm. It was at this point when the *singerie* (fr. Fr. *singe*, monkey) motif began to be used more overtly as a critical 'instrument of moral, social and political censure', particularly in relation to the manners and conduct of the rich and powerful.[574] The Antwerp painter David Teniers the Younger II (1610-1690) painted numerous scenes of dressed-up monkeys and his work did much to

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[572] Linné, Carl von, *Caroli Linnaei, Sveci, Doctoris Medicinae systema naturae, sive, Regna tria naturae systematice proposita per classes, ordines, genera, & species*, Lugduni Batavorum [Leiden, the Netherlands], Apud Theodorum Haak :Ex Typographia Joannis Wilhelmi de Groot, 1735.

[573] On this see especially Sullivan, Margaret A., 'Peter Bruegel the Elder's Two Monkeys: A New Interpretation', *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 63, No.1 (1981), 114-126.

[574] Cutler, Lucy, 'The Monkey in Art: From symbolising sensory pleasure to poking fun at the follies of mankind: Lucy Cutler on the role of the monkey in art', *A&A Art and Architecture, the Courtauld Institute of Art*, Parts 1-4, http://www.artandarchitecture.org.uk/insight/cutler_monkey.html [11/11/2010], Part 4; Ingrid Roscoe quoted in Zuckerman, Solly, *The Ape in Myth and Art*, Kelso: Verdigris Press, 1998, p. 94; see also Sullivan, 1981, (pp.114-126).

popularize the *singerie* motif as a playful tool to parody the behaviour of the bourgeoisie, though examples of the genre can be found across Europe between the seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries (Figs. 195-197).

Parrots were similarly associated with human behaviour, because, as the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-1788) explained, "In imitating our words, the parrot seems to take on something of our inclinations and habits".[575] Indeed the birds' ability to mimic human speech, not only made them more desirable to collectors, as we have seen in Cosimo III's attempt to procure through Cesare Sardi a parrot with the ability to speak (Chapter 2), but it also increased the potency of their symbolic role in art. Thus, in the Christian tradition, parrots often appeared in representations of the *Garden of Eden*, as eye-witnesses to the Fall of Man, whereas in secular paintings, parrots, as exotic and colourful pets of the elite, increasingly came to signify the luxurious decadence and sometimes also the sexual availability of their wealthy - and frequently female - owners.[576] An example is Giambattista Tiepolo's *A Young Woman with a Macaw* (ca.1760) (Fig. 198), in which a scarlet parakeet takes on the role of the woman's absent lover (whose image may be represented on the cameo pinned to her left sleeve?), the bird, like the pearls and the flowers in her hair, are all symbols of luxury and femininity.[577] Parrots, as expensive consumer commodities for the nobility, were becoming fairly common by the end of the eighteenth century, and their association with women, in particular, provided rich material for satirists, as illustrated in the following fake advert that appeared in the for-sale columns of the periodical *Affiches de Paris*, published in December 1779: "Very beautiful green parrot, who can say only *Come on up sir, pay, kiss me, and then go*; one hopes that it will learn more in the future. Price 1 louis [24 livres]."[578]

The symbolic role traditionally accorded to monkeys and parrots helps to unravel the meaning of Pietro Neri's *Allegorical scene with monkeys, parrots and a cat*. In her

[575] Buffon quoted in Robbins, Louise, E., *Elephant Slaves & Pampered Pets: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2002, p.129
[576] Verdi, Richard, *The Parrot in Art: from Dürer to Elizabeth Butterworth*, London: Scala Publishers Ltd., 2007, pp.18/22.
[577] Verdi, 2007, pp.64-5.
[578] Quoted in Robbins, 2002, p.123.

reference to this work, Maria Simari reflects that aside from the obvious references to 'greed, gluttony, and vanity' it is difficult to ascertain the painting's meaning, though the author does point out that Pietro Neri Scacciati's painting in part derived its inspiration from a painting entitled *Concert of Monkeys* by David Teniers the Younger II, which suggests that the work must have been available for study to Scacciati (Fig. 194).[579] As Simari explains, the relationship between the two paintings can be established by the 'pipe and sheets of music on the ground', but also in the semi-circular group of four monkeys in the foreground of Scacciati's painting.[580] However, aside from these visual quotations, the tenor of Pietro Neri's image is much darker and his message seems far sharper in its social critique. *Allegorical scene with monkeys, parrots and a cat* seems to reflect the polarity and inequalities between the social classes, the hungry poor on the right, represented by the cat, who seemingly had little legal protection, and the decadent and corrupt powers of the court and state, as represented by the monkeys and the parrots. Could this have been a commentary on Florentine society, and is it possible that Pietro Neri's work was somehow meant to critique the excesses and self-indulgence of elite Florentine society and perhaps even the court?

From the testimony of visitors to the city, it does appear that even in the latter decades of Cosimo III's reign, tourists 'lamented the pitiable condition into which [Florence] had fallen'.[581] The Bishop of Salisbury, Gilbert Burnet, was one such visitor, and he described his impression of city and its surrounding territories in a book published in1687, a year after his visit there:

> Florence is much sunk from what it was, ... [and] as one goes over Tuscany, it appears so dispeopled that one cannot but wonder to find a country that ...[is] now so forsaken and so poor, and ...[the peoples'] houses are such miserable ruins, that it is scarce accountable how there should be so much poverty in so rich a country, which is all over full of beggars.[582]

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[579] The reproduction in *Natura Viva* is very small, hence the poor quality of my reproduction of it, Mosco, 1985, p.74; for a digital image see http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/inv1890/scheda.asp [14/05/2011].
[580] Mosco, 1985, p.74.
[581] Hibbert, 1979, p.306.
[582] Burnet, Gilbert, *Dr. Burnet's Travels, or Letters Containing an Account of what Seemed most Remarkable in Switzerland, France, and Italy, Germany, &c.*, Amsterdam: Peter Savouret and W. Fenner, 1687, p.102.

Joseph Addison visited the city some fifteen years later and noted that 'there is still the shell of a great city, though [it is] not half furnished with inhabitants'.[583] Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, who found himself in the Tuscan capital in 1728, confirmed that a couple of decades later things had not improved and his reflections serve to highlight the apparent disparities between the city and the court. About the former he remarked that 'There is no town where men live with less luxury than Florence', and in relation to the latter, he was shocked by the wastefulness of Gian Gastone, who 'puts away everything he is given - even game and fruit - and it is left to rot after he has had it valued'.[584] Given the inequities between ordinary Florentine citizens, who were evidently struggling for survival, and the Grand Duke's apparent wastefulness, it does not seem to be beyond the realms of possibility that Scacciati's used the *singerie* theme in the way it was intended elsewhere: as a veiled and satirical reflection of the *status quo*.

Pietro Neri's *Allegorical scene with monkeys, parrots and a cat* is the artist's only work in which the allegorical content is presented in quite such a cutting and unambiguous way. It is arguable whether the iconography of the painting was meant to be read as a critical commentary on the social conditions and judicial system that were fostered in the Tuscan state during the reign of the last Medici Grand Dukes, who was, after all, Pietro Neri's patron. However, such an interpretation cannot be entirely discounted, because the Medici court was not immune to satirical attacks, especially during the closing decades of its existence. Eric Cochrane, for example, makes the point that the public responded to the increasingly eccentric behaviour of the Grand-ducal regime with a 'barrage of bizarre and critical poems'.[585] One of the more stingingly disrespectful 'ditties' is the following, which somehow echoes the sentiments expressed in Scacciati's painting:

> Fraud and ignorance today exult,
> liars and hypocrites now triumph.
> Greed and pull will get all you want,
> while the poor man sweats in vain.[586]

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[583] Addison, Joseph Esq., Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. In the Years 1701, 1702, 1703, London: J. and R. Tonson, 1705, p.228.
[584] Acton, 1988, pp.310/313.
[585] Cochrane, Eric, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries 1527-1800*: *A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1973, p.322.
[586] M. Bencini quoted in Cochrane, 1973, p.322.

Another example is the burlesque epitaph to the Florentine ruling dynasty, written by the playwright, poet and satirist to the Medici Giovan Battista Fagiuoli (1660-1742):

> I Medici - pietosi! - ai Fiorentini
> Volendo rimediar piaghe e malanni,
> Decretaron l'effigie sui fiorini
> Del Santo Protettore, San Giovanni;
> Però al Santo, al di dietro delle spalle,
> Appiopparono - al solito - le palle!
> E questa fu, pei Medici, l'eguale
> Ricetta... a ogni lor male.[587]

Viewed in the light of such overt and public criticism, it seems at least feasible that some of Pietro Neri's more satirical paintings may have had similarly burlesque overtones. A pair of pictures painted by Scacciati, which show combats between parrots and owls (Fig.199-200) lend themselves to being interpreted as a sardonic commentary on Gian Gastone's lifestyle and the dubious company of young male and female companions the Grand Duke is said to have kept. In both works there is an underlying tension between cruelty and playfulness, and an ambiguity as to whether the exotic birds are attacking each other or are engaged in playful banter with each other. The anthropomorphic behaviour of the avian protagonists, and the sense of hierarchy that Scacciati has established with the very large owl that towers above the other birds and dominates the setting and the actions in both pictures, could be read as possible allusions to the rowdy and boisterous relationship Gian Gastone is reported to have maintained with his paid companions, the so-called *Ruspanti* (a term that relates to the *ruspi* or coins with which they were paid). Drawn mainly from the lower echelons of Florentine society, the role of the *Ruspanti* was to entertain and amuse the Grand Duke with lewd and obscene antics, and to 'insult him and knock him about like a clown'. On other occasions the 'rowdy gang' forced their way into the Boboli gardens and shouted insults outside the window at the Pitti Palace where Gian Gastone slept.[588] We have already seen that parrots lent themselves to being used in an allegorical and satirical sense; the same was the case with owls. Within the symbolic language of the visual arts, owls were traditionally

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[587] 'The Medici - pietous and merciful [sarcastic]! to the Florentines / Wanting to remedy their scourges and ailments,/ Imprinted onto the florins the effigy / Of the Protector Saint, San Giovanni;/ However, at the back of the Saint's shoulders they 'slapped on' – as usual – their balls! / And this was, to the Medici, the usual/ Recipe ... to all evils/ills', Fagiuoli, Giovan Battista, *Il Poeta Fagiuoli: Motti, Facezie e Burle del Celbre Buffone di Corte*, Firenze: Adriano Salani, 1891, p.4.

[588] Acton, 1988, pp.314/324-5; Hibbert, 1979, pp.307-8; Strathern, 2005, pp.406-7.

regarded as messengers of death and consequently of ill omen, but because they are nocturnal predators, they have also come to be associated with the forces of darkness and night time activities. Hence, an owl can be interpreted as an embodiment of Satan, the prince of darkness, or it can symbolize the mythological 'Kingdom of Hypnos' (sleep).[589] These would seem to be apt allusions to a ruler who supposedly hosted lavish nocturnal 'banquets which often lasted till daybreak', and spent much of his daytime in bed.[590] Moreover, their symbolic role as messengers of impending doom was peculiarly fitting at a time when the succession of the Medici and the fate of the Tuscan state and its people hung in the balance.

Whichever way one might interpret Pietro Neri's paintings, one thing that does emerge is that exotic fauna, such as parrots and monkeys, which by the eighteenth century appear to have been fairly common in Europe, as well as rare indigenous species, such as owls, no longer meant quite the same thing as they once had.[591] It seems hard to imagine that the satirical roles Pietro Neri allotted to his depicted animals, as well as the underlying cruelty in many of his paintings, did not also hold some deeper significance in relation to the way in which such creatures were perceived and treated by those who could afford to own them. For example, his playful representation of a moustached monkey, which is shown teasing a grey crow tied to a string, might well be an ironic reflection on the ethics of keeping such animals as pets (Fig. 180). The same type of monkey appears in another painting, where it is identified as the 'BABUINO DELLA GRA(N) PR(I)N(CIPESSA) VIOLANTE' (Fig. 201).[592] In this picture the animal's cruelty is more overt, as the primate seems to be amusing himself by torturing a small goldfinch, while an owl on the right is shown tearing the wings off birds and piling their corpses at its feet. Having established that Pietro Neri used monkeys, parrots and possibly owls in an anthropomorphic sense, it is possible that these images critiqued the custom of giving children in aristocratic households

[589] Chevalier, Jean and Alain Gheerbrant, *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. by John Buchanan-Brown, London: Penguin Books, 1996, p.730; Ferguson, George, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, A Hesperides Book, New York, Oxford University Press, 1961, p.22; Hall, James, *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, London: John Murray, 1992, pp.231/284.
[590] Acton, 1988, pp.314/318; Hale, 2004, p.317; Strathern, 2005, pp.406-7.
[591] Louise Robins, taking a French perspective, writes that monkeys, parrots, canaries, Java sparrows, African finches and other seed-eating birds were the most popular pets during the eighteenth century, she also describes the pitiful conditions in which they were kept, see Robbins, 2002, pp.124-40.
[592] Inscription transcribed in Casciu, 2009, p.367.

live birds and other animals as toys to play with (Fig.202), or the fact that they were hunted and trapped to be sold at the bird markets.[593]

Indeed, the piled up corpses of dead birds in Scacciati's painting seem like a critical commentary on still-life pictures, such as Pietro Navarra's (active ca.1690-1710) *Still-life with dead birds, cabbage, fruit and mushrooms* (Fig. 203), in which dead birds are presented as just another part of nature's rich and fertile bounty - created for human consumption (both in painted form and in the form of food). Navarra's painting, along with many similar still-life pictures, formed part of the Medici's art collection, and it seems that Scacciati, in parodying precisely this element in still-life painting, appears to be questioning the very idea that animals were created just for the benefit and amusement of humankind. If this was the intended message, he was not alone in raising such ethical concerns. Keith Thomas notes that, in eighteenth-century England, people were increasingly ready to question the cruelty human beings showed towards their fellow creatures, and William Hogarth's (1697-1764) series of engravings *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (published 1751) were a moving testimony of the growing opposition towards the brutality animals had to suffer at the hands of humankind.[594] Louise Robbins, commenting on eighteenth-century France, similarly notes that questions about the morality of keeping exotic pets and menageries became part of a growing critique against the excesses of the aristocracy and the monarchy. Such questions grew louder with the onset of the French Revolution when people began to question the fact that animals in the royal menagerie were being fed while ordinary people where going hungry.[595]

Such critiques appeared at the same time as menageries among the elite went out of fashion. Scacciati's pictures highlight this in a very palpable way, for the fact that the artist,

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[593] Keith Thomas, relates that in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century professional bird catchers were trapping 'jays, thrushes, bullfinches, starlings, wrens, cuckoos and wild birds of every kind' to be sold on the London bird markets, and exotic canaries, which by this time were being bred domestically, were becoming so plentiful that even relatively humble folk could afford to buy them. Thomas, Keith, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500 -1800*, London: Penguin Books, 1984, p.111.

[594] Keith Thomas argues that the eighteenth century marked a turning point in the philosophical debates on 'the moral treatment of the lower creatures', a movement that lead to an increasing opposition towards animal cruelty, Thomas, 1984, p.149; on changing attitudes towards animals and on William Hogarth's (1697-1764) *The Four Stages of Cruelty* see Kalof, Linda, *Looking at Animals in Human History*, London: Reaktion Books, 2007, pp.124-136.

[595] Robbins, 2002, p.140; Kalof, 2007, p.122.

when painting the series of zoological paintings for the Villa Ambrogiana, seemingly had to make do with stuffed exhibits that had little direct association with his patron implies that the disinterested attitude Gian Gastone is said to have displayed towards 'game and fruit' (as noted by Montesquieu), also extended to his animal collections. The underlying cruelty and the satirical tone of Scacciati's paintings certainly suggests that living species of fauna were similarly neglected and treated with disdain at Gian Gastone's court. Gian Gastone's seeming lack of interest in animal collecting implies that, within elite society, rare and exotic beasts no longer held the same attraction as they once did, which also meant that courtly menageries were becoming a thing of the past. In fact, the situation in France almost exactly mirrored that in Florence, because the famous and magnificent menagerie at Versailles, which was established in 1665 by the French monarch Louis XIV (reg.1643-1715), was neglected and ignored by his successor, Louis XV (reg.1715-74), who was evidently just as indifferent to the animal collection as his Grand-ducal counterpart in Florence.[596] Thus while tourists to the Gardens at Versailles bemoaned the fact that the menagerie was 'not well stocked', the French tourist, Charles de Brosses (1709-1777) on a visit to the San Marco menagerie in October 1739, a mere two years after Gian Gastone's death, he similarly recorded seeing only 'une lionne...[et] un tigre ...avec deux petits tigrons'.[597] Evidently some princely menageries were liable to suffer the same inevitable fate as some of the *ancients regimes* that established them. For, just as the Royal collection of animals in France, in the wake of the French Revolution, was handed over to the nation, likewise the remaining animals in the Florentine menageries were transferred, by the Holy Roman Emperor, Francis I, to the imperial Tiergarten at Schönbrunn, which in 1765, became the first public zoo in Europe.[598] We may conclude, therefore, that animal collecting at the Florentine court died out along with the powerful dynasty that had ruled Florence for some two-hundred years, and, in the court's declining phase, the meaning animals once held for the Medici rulers suffered a similar fate.

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[596] Hoage, Robert J., Ann Roskell and Jane Mansour, Menageries to 1900', in *New Worlds, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Robert J. Hoage and William A Deiss, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp.8-18, (p.15); Robbins, 2002, pp.45-52.
[597] Robbins, 2002, p.51; 'One lion and a tiger ...with two cubs', Brosses, Charles de, *L' Italie il y a Cent Ans, ou Lettres Écrites d'Italie à Quelques Amis en 1739 et 1740 / Par Charles de Brosses ; Publiées pour la première fois sur les Manuscrits Autographes par M.R. Colomb*, 2 Vols, Paris: Alphonse Levavasseur, 1836, Vol.1, p.288.
[598] Masseti, 1991, (p.335); Fisher, James, *Zoos of the World*: *The Story of Animals in Captivity*, New York: The Natural History Press, 1967, pp.50-1; Hoage, 1996, (p.15); Robbins, 2002, pp.220-230.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that series of zoological paintings, which Cosimo III's commissioned for the private setting of his Villa Ambrogiana may be regarded as a scheme that presented the court as self-sufficient and self-contained: a microcosmic universe in which research was carried out in-house and elements from the natural world were gathered, catalogued and depicted according to the tastes and sometimes peculiar whims of the god-like Prince. The Medici Court at this stage was evidently confident of its place within the social order and therefore no longer felt the need to use animals in art to make grand political or cultural 'statements' to a wider international audience. Yet in many other respects the paintings Bartolomeo Bimbi created for his Grand-ducal patron demonstrated both a continuation of the underlying ethos that prompted earlier ventures, as well as shifting attitudes in collecting practices and in the visual representation of animals. Thus, a closer examination of the Ambrogiana series of animal 'portraits' has revealed Cosimo III's continued commitment to scientific and experimental naturalism and also his evident enthusiasm for the collecting of rare and exotic fauna, even though notions of what constituted 'exotic' had evidently shifted to include the malformed accidents produced by nature, as well as the sometime curious results of human intervention with animal breeding. Likewise, Bartolomeo Bimbi's hybrid animal 'portraits', while retaining a firm connection with Jacopo Ligozzi's pictorial naturalism, also demonstrated the artist's ability to draw on other artistic influences, notably still-life and landscape painting, to create a set of zoological works that were uniquely fitted to his patron's desired aims. That is, to gather within the princely setting of the Villa Ambrogiana, a set of animal 'portraits' that, individually, could function as autonomous, decorative works of art and, collectively, represented a depicted inventory of the fauna represented in the Grand-ducal collection.

The works Gian Gastone commissioned from Pietro Neri Scacciati to add to the Ambrogiana series demonstrated a significant shift in the values attached to rare and exotic fauna by the last remaining Medici Grand Duke, as well as a different approach to the depiction of birds and other animals. I have shown that Scacciati's reliance on stuffed and mounted specimens, together with his interests in visual allegory and satire can be seen both as a manifestation of Gian Gastone's seeming lack of appreciation for animal

collecting, and on the part of the painter, as a satirical reflection or veiled critique of the eccentricities of Gian Gastone's court and the use of precious beasts as pets for the rich. Thus, in broader terms, Scacciati's paintings revealed society's changing attitudes towards their fellow creatures, and the beginnings of a culture in which people began to question the moral right of humankind to own and exploit animals for their own use and pleasure. There was thus something rather retrospective and apocalyptic about the Ambrogiana animal paintings, a commission which envisaged as its primary purpose to stand as a visual testimony and inventory of the rich and varied fauna that once inhabited Grand-ducal menageries and aviaries, but which paradoxically also mirrored the Medici court's slow and inevitable journey towards its own destruction.

CONCLUSION

This study has been driven by two principal objectives: one key aim was to examine the role rare, wild and exotic animals played in the cultural self-fashioning and the political imaging of the Medici's Ducal and Grand-ducal court in Florence; the second principal objective of my enquiry centred on the artistic portrayal of birds, mammals and other types of fauna. The two areas of investigation - deployment and depiction - have been shown to be very closely interrelated, because the use of real animals in courtly culture and their intended signification as depicted objects in Medici-commissioned works of art affected the way particular species were visually represented. The mode of depiction thus played a crucial role in the self-imaging process. The three case studies were chosen to represent different points in the Medici's two-hundred year reign as Dukes of the former Florentine Republic and Grand Dukes of Tuscany. This approach has allowed me to explore and reveal the diverse and nuanced ways in which both real and depicted animals were used and manipulated by different members of the Medici regime, initially in the fashioning of themselves as a viable court and subsequently in establishing their reputation as patrons of the sciences and the arts. In a broader sense, this study has further highlighted the role of the early modern court in facilitating the developments that occurred in the picturing of rare and exotic fauna and in the scholarly and technological advancement of zoology, anatomy and taxidermy.

The role of animals in self-fashioning

Benozzo Gozzoli's frescoes of the *Journey of the Magi* have demonstrated that members of the early branch of the Medici family were clearly aware of the unique power rare animals possessed in conferring courtly status. This is made clear by Gozzoli's depicted beasts of the hunt, whose portrayal relied on effective borrowings from modelbook images created in the milieu of the northern Italian courts, and whose role was thus to convey the Medici's ambition to claim parity with the culture and rituals of the princes in the North of Italy. The painted narrative belied the fact that, at that time, the family's social status was neither courtly nor are they likely to have possessed the types of exotic beasts that are depicted in the frescoes. The Medici's real and legitimate power began in earnest only under Cosimo I's reign, first as Duke of Florence and later as Grand

Duke of Tuscany, and the evidence presented in this study has shown that he lost no time in converting the ideals represented in Gozzoli's frescoes into a reality. Cosimo I established the first ducal menagerie, he actively collected rare fauna and he used animals in rituals of court. The evidence has shown that Cosimo I's policies were geared primarily to asserting his political authority to a home audience and he achieved his objective by means of claiming authority and ownership over the very symbols and municipal spaces that had particular associations with the former Republican government. Thus, both his chosen location for the new *Serraglio de leoni*, nearby San Marco, and the appropriation of the Florentine lion collection for his personal use, can be read as an absolutist expression of his ducal power and control. The acquisition of the Palazzo Pitti and the subsequent development of the adjoining Boboli gardens, which was later to become the location of the second menagerie, the *Serraglio degli Animali Rari*, was part of that same political strategy. The Florentine lions, in the form of diplomatic gifts, were used as a powerful tool in his foreign policy, and the famous giraffe, which was sent by the Sultan of Egypt to the 'Florentine nation' in 1478, was likewise claimed by Cosimo I as a Medici symbol in Vasari's fresco of *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors*, which the Duke commissioned to be painted in the former Republican headquarter, the Palazzo Vecchio. Vasari's fresco took up the idea first used in Gozzoli's painted narrative, and reiterated again in Andrea del Sarto's and Alessandro Allori's fresco of the *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*, that is, to deploy animal imagery as an effective and memorable means with which to communicate the painting's intended politicized message. Thus, in Vasari's painting, the image of the giraffe and other depicted beasts were given the fictional role to present Cosimo I's famous ancestor, Lorenzo *il Magnifico*, as honoured recipients of the Sultan's diplomatic gifts. The theme of diplomatic animal gifts was taken up again later, in Alessandro Allori's contributions to the fresco begun by del Sarto, although this time the exotic animals alluded to gifts that were given to Lorenzo's son, Pope Leo X, the man who represented a connecting link between the two branches of the Medici family, and whose election to the Pontifical office had paved the way to the Medici's subsequent rise to power. It has been shown that the two fresco schemes created by del Sarto, Vasari and Allori were meant to be read in relation to each other, and that, combined, the works reinforce ideas about 'dynasty and destiny', of inherited power, and of

the family's historic links with international powers.[599] However, a central point of the argument presented in case study one was to demonstrate that traditional readings of the giraffe in del Sarto's fresco were influenced by Vasari's later pictorial endorsement of Lorenzo de' Medici as intended recipient of the Sultan's animal gift, and also by the animal motifs Allori added to the *Salone Grande* decorations. On its own, however, and without the effective intervention of Medici propaganda, del Sarto's fresco is unlikely to have prompted a reading of the animal as a *topos* for Lorenzo.

The second-generation Grand Dukes, Francesco I and Ferdinando I de' Medici, were to reap the benefits of Cosimo I's success in establishing the Medici court as credible and viable force in European politics, and also from the powerful alliances their father had managed to forge with other courts during his reign. As has been made clear, the Medici's relations with other rulers, especially those who controlled the trade routes to Asia and the New World, facilitated them with greater access to rare species of fauna, but it also brought them into competition with higher powers in Europe. The repercussions of this are reflected both in the Medici's collecting practices and in the way animals were used and depicted in the visual arts. Statistical evidence has shown that animal gifts received by members of the Medici family increased during the reigns of Francesco I and Ferdinando I, as did animal procurement, which shows that the two Grand Dukes clearly made great efforts to build up and to diversify the Medici's zoological collections. Chapter 2 has revealed Francesco I's interests in the procurement of rare birds, and his endeavour to show off his collection of avian specimens probably accounts for the fact that the aviary in the garden of his newly-built villa at Pratolino was designed to be one of the dominant architectural features, and was a building that attracted much contemporary praise. Ferdinando I, likewise, made the Grand-ducal court's menagerie one of the focal points of his architectural patronage. The construction of an amphitheatre at the *Serraglio de leoni* was conceived as a space for the fashionable practice of entertaining important visitors to the court with animal combats in imitation of Roman practices. These 'heraldic uses' of animals signified both the control

[599] The title and theme of Janet Cox-Rearick's book, Cox-Rearick, 1984.

and power of the ruler and also, metaphorically, 'his conquest of distant lands'.[600] The material has thus shown that the founding of menageries and aviaries within the princely domain and the ritualistic use of animals were both clearly regarded by the Medici rulers as powerful ways of expressing the Florentine court's magnificence, prestige and wealth.

Patronage of the arts and sciences have been shown to be equally fundamental in demonstrating the Medici princes' ability to promote in Florence a cultural and artistic ambiance that would equal that of other major European courts. Francesco I's need to prove himself as a worthy competitor to the Austrian Imperial court has been cited as a motivating force in Francesco I's decision to avail himself of the specific skills and talents of the naturalist painter, Jacopo Ligozzi, and it suggests why the Grand Duke was eager to use his zoological and botanical collections in a public-spirited way, to enhance scholarly knowledge in the natural sciences. Francesco I's sponsorship of Aldrovandi's cataloguing venture highlights the fact that the reputation of a prince depended as much on his willingness to support projects that benefited the greater good as it did on enhancing his own splendour. Ferdinando I, in contrast, focused on the decorative arts as a commercial venture particularly one that would promote the Medici court's artistic pre-eminence and prestige to an elite, connoiseurial European audience. Both he, and later his son, Cosimo II de' Medici exploited the collection of zoological and botanical illustrations Ligozzi had created for Francesco I, and the artist's skills as painter of animals and plants in an entrepreneurial sense, insofar as his images were used as an inspirational source of reference for the creation of the new-look *pietra dura* artefacts that were to showcase the Grand-ducal workshops as a centre of artistic excellence. As has been shown, both the naturalist-inspired iconography and the novel methods of *commesso* inlay set new standards in the design and manufacture of *pietra dura* artefacts. Indeed, both Ferdinando I's introduction of the state-run *Galleria dei Lavori* and his promotion of a novel method of 'painting in stone' influenced the production of hardstone commodities at other European courts.[601] The adaptation of Ligozzi's illustrations to the very different contexts of naturalist print and hardstone mosaic, while yielding very different results, allowed the

[600] Senior, 2004, (p.211).
[601] Giusti, 2002, p.103.

Medici Grand Dukes to advertise to a wider international audience not only the rich and varied fauna and flora represented in their zoological and botanical collections but also to promote the learned culture of the Medici princes, as well as the artistic supremacy of the Florentine workshops.

Cosimo III and Gian Gastone represent the Medici court in the closing phases of its two-hundred year reign of Florence and the Tuscan state. My examination of a series of animal paintings the Grand Dukes commissioned from Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati has revealed contradictory and opposing evidence about the attitudes these last two Medici rulers displayed towards zoological collecting and the cultural values they promoted during their respective reigns. The Grand-ducal court was at the height of its power when Cosimo III ascended the Tuscan throne, and his patronage seems to have been geared towards building upon the legacy left by his predecessors. The *Serraglio degli animal rari,* which Cosimo III commissioned to be built in the Boboli Garden, exemplifies this. It also offers testimony that Cosimo III shared his ancestors' enthusiasm for animal collecting and that he actively sought to enlarge the collection, which he did, both via agent procurement and by means of experimental crossbreeding. The menagerie building itself connects with ideas expressed in earlier zoological edifices, namely, that nature's rich and diverse fauna could be embellished by its juxtaposition with art, but also that the architectural nature of the space could reveal something about the personal priorities of the Grand-ducal commissioner. Thus, while the character and decor of the *Serraglio* turned the encounter with the beasts into an aesthetic experience, the compartmentalized layout of the structure imposed a certain order upon the imprisoned creatures that reflected Cosimo III's individualistic classification system. A similar endeavour to classify and categorize nature also informed Cosimo III's venture to commission complementary series of paintings depicting the fauna and flora represented in the Medici's zoological and botanical collections and to display these in the various country villas. I have proposed that this can be seen as a manifestation of the court as a self-sufficient microcosm in which the god-like ruler (Cosimo III) assumed total control not only over what was collected, but also on how the fauna and flora in the princely collections were being investigated, conceptualized, catalogued and visually represented. The approach reflected a ruler who was evidently

secure of his place within the social order and perhaps no longer felt quite the same demand to prove himself in a public and international arena as his predecessors had done.

Gian Gastone made his own contribution to the Ambrogiana's collection of zoological paintings. However, the pictures he commissioned have here been interpreted to project quite a different message. The visual evidence has demonstrated that Pietro Neri Scacciati's paintings were modelled exclusively on the long-dead and stuffed exhibits from the Boboli menagerie's room of taxidermied specimens. This has been proposed as an alternative explanation for the artist's seeming abandonment of the scientific naturalism that had characterised Jacopo Ligozzi's and Batolomeo Bimbi's zoological paintings. Instead, Scacciati's biting satire has been interpreted as a possible veiled 'attack' on Gian Gastone, whose lifestyle and personality were ill-suited to perform his duty as a princely ruler of the Tuscan state, and, as a consequence invited similar satirical critiques from other contemporary observers. Furthermore, the fact that the depicted animals in Scacciati's paintings appear to have had little or no direct association with Gian Gastone, combined with the artist's evident rejection of the mimetic tradition has made clear that animal collecting evidently held no attractions for the last Medici ruler, nor does he seem to have shared his predecessors' interest in natural history. Instead, the underlying cruelty in many of Scacciati's animal pictures suggest that within elite European society unusual and exotic birds and mammals had lost the power to illicit the same fascination and wonder as they once had. It has been shown that this trend coincided with a more general shift in humanity's attitudes towards their fellow creatures, which questioned human cruelty towards animals and critiqued the idea that wild and exotic beasts should be thought of as 'playthings' for the rich. Instead, nature's rich and diverse fauna came to be regarded as a heritage to which all human beings should have access. These shifts in attitudes were to lead to a gradual decline in princely menageries and to the formation of the first publicly accessible zoos, such as the Imperial *Tiergarten* at Schönbrunn, and the establishment, in 1794, of the first national menagerie in Paris, the *Jardin des plantes*, to which the animal collection formerly belonging to the French monarchy was moved.[602] The Ambrogiana

[602] The *Jardin des plantes* a division of *Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle*, Hoage, 1996 (p.15); Robbins, 2002, pp.213-230; Fig.8.2, p.223.

zoological paintings thus, in an apocalyptic way, mirrored both the demise of the Medici dynasty itself, and the end of collecting at the Florentine court.

Animal collecting and depiction

The close analysis of a core group of documents in chapter two of this study has made clear the ways and means by which the Medici acquired animals and the types and approximate quantities of species that entered the Medici's zoological collections. Crucially, the evidence has shown that for collectors, such as the Medici, who lacked direct access to the maritime trade routes to Asia and the New World, it was often far more challenging to obtain fauna from these distant continents than is commonly assumed. This was because the lengths and complexities involved in the shipment of species to the ports in northern Europe and Italy meant that many of the more delicate creatures died on route or arrived at their destination in a fragile condition. This suggests that living species from the newly discovered parts of the globe were probably a fairly rare presence in the Medici's zoological collections, in contrast to animals from other parts of Europe and African species. Europe's proximity to the African continent meant that European collectors were not only better informed about African wildlife but zoological collections also tended to be better represented with fauna from this part of the world. [603] Evidence from the Medici archive confirms this. The fact that species could be transported with relatively ease and speed from the seaports in North Africa to Venice, where the Florentine rulers obtained such animals, made the procurement and replacement of livestock less problematic than from other regions of the globe. Animal gifts the Medici received from African heads of state also tended to be comparatively generous and archival records document several very generous gifts, consisting of numerous species that were given to various members of the family. These again point to a more consistent supply of African beasts in the Florentine collections. The challenges the Medici faced in the procurement and replacement of animals from the New World and from Asia probably made it a more pressing priority to visually record their existence. This explains why it is often the rarer species that are

[603] George, Wilma, 'Sources and background to discoveries of new animals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', *History of Science*, Vol. 18, part 2, No.40 (1980), 79-104 (p.95).

commemorated in the works of art discussed in the three case studies, and not the more readily available creatures.

A common assumption that the research has challenged is the notion that artistic innovation 'spread outwards from Florence' to other parts of Italy and Europe, as was expressed recently in the visitor guide to the 2010 exhibition *Fra Angelico to Leonardo Italian Renaissance Drawings* (see Introduction). As far as the depiction of animals was concerned, quite the opposite is in fact true. All three case studies have provided clear evidence of the fact that the Florentine rulers depended on northern Italian practitioners and on artistic practices developed in the North of Italy and in northern Europe to create the works of art that have formed the primary material for this study. The Florentine painters who executed the frescoes discussed in case study one and also Ligozzi's zoological illustrations can all be linked to the formal approaches first observed in the modelbooks of northern Italian artists, such as Giovannino de Grassi and Antonio Pisanello, and in the case of Ligozzi, also to the visual culture nurtured at the Habsburg court in Vienna. This latter connection offers scope for further research. Likewise, the craftsmen who 'translated' Ligozzi's illustration into print (Aldrovandi's *Natural History*) and hardstone mosaics (*pietra dura* artefacts) all came from northern parts of Italy and Europe. The series of animal paintings at the villa Medici Ambrogiana, while being painted by local artists, nevertheless drew on pictorial traditions and genres developed in the Netherlands. Bartolomeo Bimbi was inspired by still-life paintings and probably also by ideas developed in the 'paradise landscapes' produced by the Brueghel workshop in Antwerp. Pietro Neri Scacciati's paintings can be related to the increasing popularity in parts of northern Europe for *singerie* pictures, in which fashionably attired monkeys and other animals were used as a medium for social and political satire.

One of the central findings of the research is that changes to the schema in animal depiction happened only very gradually and that conventional formal qualities and traditional artistic practices continued to influence the ways in which artists working for the Medici approached the artistic portrayal of animals. Ligozzi's animal studies, for example, were based on graphic conventions that were first used in late fourteenth-century and

fifteenth-century modelbooks. Yet, Ligozzi's highly detailed and analytical depiction of the animal's outer appearance is a quality that connects his work not just to the paintings later produced by Bimbi, but also to modern-day animal illustrations. Thus, Bimbi's depiction of animals in what can best be described as 'frozen' poses and his preoccupation with closely observed surface detail are aspects that pay homage to the work of his predecessor, whereas his portrayal of creatures from diverse viewpoints represents a departure from the Ligozzian paradigm, as does his use of a landscape setting.

Visual evidence presented in case studies one and two (chapters 3 and 4) confirm that the longstanding practice of copying from existing visual prototypes remained part of artistic tradition. This undermines the commonly held view that artists were increasingly encouraged to draw animals from life rather than from established models. Indeed, in relation to the frescoes discussed in chapter 3, the use of prototypes provided an effective means for the Medici to advertise their princely pretensions and to identify themselves with the cultures of the northern Italian courts. Visual quotations also helped to create links between different frescos that celebrated the giraffe, and made it possible to read the animal as a '*topos* for Lorenzo' even in works where such a connection was not necessarily intended. The ability to produce precise replicas of existing zoological illustrations was evidently one of the specialized skills of the naturalist painter, as has been amply demonstrated in the discussion relating to the adaptation of Jacopo Ligozzi's zoological illustrations to the prints in Aldrovandi's books. Ligozzi's work has further shown that although it might have been desirable to depict animals from the living model, this was often not possible to achieve, especially with creatures that originated from faraway places, which meant that they sometimes had to be sent in pickled form or dried form.[604] Thus, it is generally more accurate to translate the expression '*dal vivo*' (from life) as it was understood in the period covered by this study: that is, from the 'real' thing, but one that was not necessarily alive.

[604] Wilma George makes the point that most species of paradise birds from New Guinea and the Malaya spice islands reached Europe only in dried form, and often with their heads and feet missing, which explains why they are invariably described and illustrated inaccurately in naturalist encyclopaedia published before the end of the eighteenth century, George, 1980, (pp.92-94).

The practice of copying from existing prototypes has also raised fundamental questions regarding artistic originality and the authenticity of the original design, especially in relation to the work of Jacopo Ligozzi (chapter 4), whose zoological illustrations were copied in almost identical manner by his cousin and then re-copied in the process of 'translating' the designs to the prints used in Aldrovandi's *Natural History*. The same was the case when Jacopo Ligozzi's designs were adapted to the hardstone mosaics produced at the Grand-ducal workshops. In the latter context, in spite of frequent claims in the scholarship on Florentine *pietra dura* that Jacopo Ligozzi was a prime mover in the creation of the new naturalist-inspired hardstone artefacts, this research has shown that it is often near impossible to match *pietra dura* objects to particular zoological designs. It has been proposed that this was partly due to the differences in media (hardstone), but also because neither faithful adherence to the pictorial model nor integrity to the species portrayed was seemingly considered a priority. This factor has been identified as a fundamental distinction between scientific naturalism, where exact replication of the original pictorial source was considered key in the transmission of accurate scientific information, and decorative naturalism, where the desired effect was centred not on mimetic verisimilitude, but on the materiality and aesthetic appeal of the hardstone medium into which the zoological subject was 'translated'. Indeed, the practical and mediation processes involved in the adaptation of zoological and botanical illustrations to other media emphasises the fact that artistic production was still very much centred on collaboration, a process, which often denied hierarchical distinctions accorded to individual contributors. Thus, the notion of art as 'a collective product', undermines our modern-day obsession with attribution and implies that, when dealing with much of the work discussed in this study, one should resist the idea that artefacts were the authentic expression of an individual maker.[605]

Throughout the thesis it has been shown that the creatures in the Medici's collections were commemorated in many different ways. The birds and other beasts Francesco I kept at his garden in Pratolino, for instance, were celebrated in Ligozzi's zoological paintings, in Agolanti's poem and in the accounts of visitors to the Villa.

[605] Wolff, Janet, *The Social Production of Art: Second Edition*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1993, pp.32-3.

Likewise, in case study three, it has been noted that birds, mammals, and other types of fauna were collected by the Medici Grand Dukes in three ways: alive, in stuffed form and depicted in art. The series of zoological paintings at the villa Ambrogiana were themselves documented in several Grand-ducal *guardaroba* inventories and payment ledgers. Species that entered the Medici's zoological collections via agent procurement and gifts were recorded in letters and other court documents, whereas many of the taxidermied specimens formerly belonging to the Medici were included an inventory compiled by Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti in 1763 in his unpublished manuscript entitled *Catalogo delle produzioni naturali che si conservano nella Galleria Imperiale di Firenze*.[606] These different forms of keeping, preserving, commemorating, recording and documenting animals have the effect of amplifying the impression left to posterity of the quantities of animals the Medici actually possessed, and this may have contributed to the somewhat over-inflated and exaggerated claims that are sometimes made in relation to the size of the Medici's animal collection. Thus, I began this research project believing the popular view that of the 'Western seraglios of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries... [t]he most successful and best-known example is that of the Medici in Florence', however, what I have discovered instead is that the Medici were particularly adept at using what their limited contact with the New World and Asia allowed them to obtain in the way of exotic species to their best advantage.[607] Stephen Greenblatt identified the process of self-fashioning as a 'manipulable, and artful process', and evidence presented in this study has revealed that this principle was at the centre of the Medici's exploitation of animals as a dominant motif in their art. For images of zoological subjects served them not only in promoting their political and cultural ambitions in an effective and memorable way, but they also allowed them to advertise, in some cases somewhat deceitfully, that they possessed the kinds of animals that are depicted in the works of art they commissioned. Thus, the Medici propaganda was ultimately effective in glossing over the fact that the Florentine menageries and aviaries were probably never quite as magnificently stocked as the much grander menageries maintained by the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs, who controlled the access

[606] Targioni Tozzetti, 1763, Vol.1.
[607] Baratay, 2004, p.19.

to Asia and the New World.[608] Yet, paradoxically, it is the menageries of the Medici court that are best remembered, because, the Medici rulers knew the wisdom expressed in the eloquent remarks made by the French poet, Jean de La Fontaine, when describing the menagerie at Versailles: "So many species of bird [and other animals] are multiplied from a single species...[through] artifice and diverse imaginings".[609]

[608] Greenblatt, Stephen, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1984 (paperback edn), p.2.
[609] Jean de La Fontaine quoted in Senior, 2004 (p.212).

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Abbreviations of Archives:

ASF Florence, Archivio di Stato di Firenze

BNCF Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze

GDSU Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi

IMSS Florence, Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza (now known as the Museum Galileo)

BUB Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna

Archival Fonts of the Archivio di Stato di Firenze:

GM Guardaroba Medicea

MM Miscellanea Medicea

MdP Mediceo del Principato

MAP Medici Archive Project

Archivio di Stato di Firenze

Mediceo del Principato (MdP)

4 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Minute: Cosimo I / Segretario: Concino.
9 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
11 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Minute: Cosimo I / Segretario: Concino.
13 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Minute: Cosimo I / Segretario: Concino.
58 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Minute: Cosimo I e Francesco, prinicipe reggente.
229 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Francesco / Principe ereditario, poi reggente.
254 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Francesco I / Segretari: Serguidi, Vinta.
257 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Minute: Francesco I / Segretario: Vinta.
269 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Francesco I / Segretari: Serguidi, Vinta.
270 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Francesco I / Segretari: Serguidi,Vinta.
280 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Ferdinando I / Segretari: Serguidi, Vinta.
282 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Ferdinando I / Segretari: Serguidi, Vinta.
300 Minute di Lettere e Registri / Registri: Ferdinando I / Segretari: Serguidi, Vinta.
401 Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I.
465 Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I.
479 Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I.
521a Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I e Francesco, principe reggente.
538a Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I e Francesco, principe reggente.
582 Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I e Francesco, principe reggente.
600 Carteggio Universale / Cosimo I / Appendice al carteggio di Cosimo I.

693 Carteggio Universale / Francesco I.
746 Carteggio Universale / Francesco I.
1082 Carteggio Universale / Ferdinando II.
1132 Carteggio di Cosimo III.
1169 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
1172 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
1173 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
1175 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
1176 Carteggio dei Segretari / Pier Francesco del Riccio.
1212 Carteggio dei Segretari / Antonio Serguidi).
2939 Carteggio dei Segretari / Antonio Serguidi.
2942 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Mantova.
2944 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Mantova.
2956 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Mantova.
3108 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Milano.
4050 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Urbino.
4051 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Italiani / Urbino.
4274 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Levante.
4866 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Francia.
4901 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Spagna.
4902 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Spagna.
4906 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Spagna.
5922b Carteggi dei Principi, delle Granduchesse e delle Principesse / Eleonora di Toledo, duchessa.
5052 Relazioni con Stati Italiani ed Esteri / Stati Esteri / Spagna.
5923 Carteggi dei Principi, delle Granduchesse e delle Principesse / Giovanna d'Austria, granduchessa.
6108 Carteggi dei Principi, delle Granduchesse e delle Principesse / Caterina di Ferdinando I, duchessa di Mantova / Lettere alla duchessa.

Miscellanea Medicea (MM)
92/IV (*Lettere di Cesare Sardi, 1706-1725*).

Guardaroba Medicea (GM)
184 (*Debitori a Creditori della Galleria dal Marzo 1590*).
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The role of rare and exotic animals in the self-fashioning of the early modern court: the Medici court in Florence as a case study

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CHAPTER 1
Menageries in Medicean Florence

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Francesco and Raffaello Petrini, *Pianta della Catena* (Painted map of Florence copied from a woodcut attributed to Francesco di Lorenzo Rosselli of 1471-1482, which is in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Kupferstichkabinett), detail showing San Marco and Santissima Annunziata, 1887, tempera on canvas, Florence: Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*', Inventory: MFCE 2001-3936/OBLA.

Fig. 19
Monte di Giovanni, An image from a missal created for the Baptistery of Florence, showing the Annunciation and a view of the Piazza San Marco in Florence, 1509-1510, 38 x 27cm, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Barb. Lat. 610, c.7 recto. Picture source: Ferretti, Emanuela, 'La Sapienza di Niccolò da Uzzano: l'istituzione e le sue tracce architettoniche', *Annali di Storia di Firenze*, IV (2009), 89-149 (p.149, Fig. 6), http://www.dssg.unifi.it/SDF/annali/annali2009.htm [22/07/2011].

Fig. 20
Stefano Bonsignori (designer), Bonaventura Billocardi (engraver), *Nova pulcherrimae civitatis Florentiae topographia accuratissime delineata*, (detail of the *Serraglio de leoni* east of San Marco area), 1575/6-1584, engraving with watercolour on nine sheets of paper, 126.5 x 137 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Inv.2614, st. sc.

Figs. 21 a-b
Andrea Scacciati, *Veduta della Piazza San Marco*, 1725-1771, engraving, Florence: Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*', Inventory: MFCE 2001-3784/OBLA. Reproduced in Richa, Giuseppe, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine, divise ne's suoi quartieri / opera di Giuseppe Richa della Compagnia di Gesú*, 10 Vols, Firenze: P.G. Viviani, 1754-62, Vol. VII, p.113.

Fig. 22
Friedrich Bernhard Werner (artist), Johannes George Merz (engraver), *Vellum di trentadue Vedute di Firenze*, Plate 18: View of the church of San Marco and the *Serraglio de leoni* and other ferocious animals in Florence, 1735, etching, 19.5 x 30 cm, Firenze: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Cappugi ms. 397.

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Giovanni Stradano, *Combat between a lion and other animals*, 1580, pen and ink drawing, Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), 852 Orn.

Fig. 29
Jan van der Straet (Giovanni Stradano), *Combat between a lion and other animals*, from Jan van der Straet's *Venationes ferarum, avium, piscium: Pugnae bestiariorum: & mutuae bestiarum*, engraved by Jan Collaert and published by Philippe Galle (Antwerp, 1566-1628), reproduced in Baroni Vannucci, Alessandra, *Jan Van der Straet detto Giovanni Stradano: flandrus pictor et inventor*, Milano: Jandi Sapi, 1997, p.372, Pl.6.

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Lion hunt in front of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, frontispiece in Muratori, Lodovico Antonio & Volpi, Guglielmo's *Ricordi di Firenze dell' anno 1459 di autore anonimo,* Vol. II , p.724, reproduced in Loisel, Gustave , *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours*, 3 Vols, Paris: Octave Doin et Fils,1912; Vol. I, p. 207.

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Giusto Utens, *Medici Villa and Garden at Pratolino (Villa di Pratolino)*, 1598-99, tempera on canvas, 145 x 245 cm, 1 of 17 lunettes commissioned by Ferdinando I, Florence: Museo '*Firenze com'era*'. SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artstor.org.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/index.shtml [2010-2011].

Figs. 34 a-c
Sgrilli, Bernardo Sansone, 'Pianta dei due Barchi, Viali, Fontane, e Fabbriche della Real Villa di Pratolino', *in Descrizione della Regia Villa, fontane e fabbriche di Pratolino*, Florence, 1742, p. 53.
http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/ECHOdocuViewfull?url=/mpiwg/online/permanent/echo/pratolino/sgrilli_desc_1742/pageimg&mode=imagepath&viewMode=images&tocMode=thumbs&pn=4 [15/08/2011].

Fig. 35
Sgrilli, Bernardo Sansone, *Descrizione della Regia Villa, fontane e fabbriche di Pratolino*, Florence, 1742, p. 39, http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/ECHOdocuViewfull?url=/mpiwg/online/permanent/echo/pratolino/sgrilli_desc_1742/pageimg&mode=imagepath&viewMode=images&tocMode=thumbs&pn=4 [15/08/2011].

Fig. 36
Hülsen, Christian, 'Ein deutscher Architekt in Florenz (1600)', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 2. Bd., Vols. 5/6 (1917), 152-193, p. 175. Abb.17.

Fig. 37
The *Grande Voliera* following the restoration conducted by Demidoff. Picture source: Zangheri, Luigi, *Pratolino, il Giardino delle Meraviglie*, 2 Vols, Firenze: Gonnelli, 1979, Vol. II, p. 215, Plate 215.

Fig. 38
Francesco and Raffaello Petrini, *Pianta della Catena* (Painted map of Florence copied from a woodcut attributed to Francesco di Lorenzo Rosselli of 1471-1482, which is in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Kupferstichkabinett), (detail showing the Palazzo Pitti in the centre), 1887, tempera on canvas, Florence: Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*', Inventory: MFCE 2001-3936/OBLA.

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Fig. 40
Stefano Bonsignori (designer), Bonaventura Billocardi (engraver), *Nova pulcherrimae civitatis Florentiae topographia accuratissime delineata*, (detail of the Boboli Gardens), 1575/6-1584, copper engraving with watercolour on nine sheets of paper, 126.5 x 137 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Inv.2614, st. sc.

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Bernardino Poccetti, animals appearing in the decorations of the vaulted ceiling in the *Grotta Grande*, 1586-87, fresco, Florence: the Boboli Gardens (Photo: author, October 2008).

Fig. 43
Bernardino Poccetti, animals appearing in the decorations of the vaulted ceiling in the *Grotta Grande*, 1586-87, fresco, Florence: the Boboli Gardens (Photo: author, October 2008).

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Plan of the Boboli Gardens. Picture source: Medri, Litta and Giorgio Galletti, 'Boboli Gardens', in *Pitti Palace: all the museums all the works (The Official Guide)*, ed. by Marco Chiarini, Livorno: sillabe s.r.l., 2001, pp.142-155 (p.142).

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Giuliano Anastasi (?), *Plan of the City of Florence* (detail showing the Boboli Gardens), ca. 1767, Florence: Archivio di Stato, Segretaria di Gabinetto, Pezzo 625, 'Pianta della città di Firenze'. Picture source: Medri, Litta, Maria (ed.), *Il Giardino di Boboli*, (Banca Toscana), Milano: Cinisello Balsamo / Silvana, 2003, p.46, Pl. 5.

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The Medici's animal collections: processes of procurement and practices of exchange

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http://occawlonline.pearsoned.com/bookbind/pubbooks/brummettconcise/chapter98/medialib/thumbs/ch16_308.html[09/06/2011].

Fig. 56
European Penetration of Africa and Asia, 1700 (showing the Dutch possessions in the East Indies). King, Margaret L., *The Renaissance in Europe*, London: Laurence King Publishing, 2003, Map 14, p.335.

Fig. 57
The shipyard of the Dutch East India Company in Amsterdam (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or VOC), circa 1750. Het scheepswerfterrein van de VOC op Oostenburg in Amsterdam. Prent van de VOC-werf uit 1750, met op de voorgrond de IJ-oever met twee scheepshellingen. Het originele bestand staat. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Voc.jpg [13/01/2011].

CHAPTER 3
Three Medici Frescoes: the animal motif in the service of political propaganda

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Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi*, 1459-62, fresco, tempera and oil, west wall, Florence: Chapel, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi.

Fig. 59
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http://www.artstor.org.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/index.shtml [2010-2011].

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Fig. 62
Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (Strozzi Altarpiece formerly at the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Trinità, Florence) (detail), 1423, tempera on wood, 303 x 282 cm (incl. frame), Florence: Uffizi Gallery.

Fig. 63
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Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (detail from Fig. 62, the central panel, showing the heads of a lion and a cheetah).

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Giovannino de'Grassi, *Taccuino* (lammergeyer, goldfinch and ringneck parakeet), ca.1380-1400, silverpoint heightened with white, pen and wash with watercolour,
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Fig. 83
Anonymous Florentine Engraver, *A Giraffe and its Keeper* (the inscription 'Alta Palmi XXIIII', 24 palms, refers to the animal's height), 1490s, hand-coloured engraving, 25.8 x 18.3 cm, the print was pasted next to an account of the Egyptian embassy that brought the giraffe to Florence in 1487, in Sigismondo Tizio's *Historiae Senenses*, Vol. VI, from 1476-1505, Vatican City: Vatican Library, Ms. Chigi, G.11.36. 148v.

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Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 4 showing only the section painted by del Sarto during the first phase of the creation of the fresco) 1519-21, fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande*.
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Fig. 87
Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 4 showing the giraffe), 1519-21, fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande*, Photo: Scala, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
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Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing the chameleon).

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Fig. 96
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Fig. 97
Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors*,
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Fig. 98
Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors*,
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Fig. 100
Agnolo Bronzino (drawing and cartoon), Jan Rost (textile), *Portiera of Abundance*, 1545, tapestry in wool, silk, gold and gilded silver, 8-10 warps per cm, 242 x 146 cm, Florence, Palazzo Pitti, Depositi Arazzi.

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Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax*, 1478-82, fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande* (northeast wall).
Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
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Fig. 102
Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax* (detail of Fig.101, showing an elephant being led past an edifice that looks reminiscent of the Castel Sant Angelo, Rome).

Fig. 103
Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax* (detail of Fig. 101, showing an elephant being presented to a papal figure an assembled audience).

CHAPTER 4
The role of Jacopo Ligozzi's zoological illustrations in the Medici's patronage of science and art: tensions between scientific naturalism and decorative naturalism

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Jacopo Ligozzi, illustration of three fish from the *Meervischbuch* (Manuscript Book of seawater fish), Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften und Inkunabelsammlung, Cod. min. 83, ser. no. 2693, fols. 18r. and 2r.

Figs. 105 a-b
Giorgio Liberale (attrib.), *Sea Animals* (unsigned and undated), watercolour on parchment, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. ser. no.2669, fols. 47r. and 91r.

Fig. 106
Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Study of a Helmeted Curassow, 1550-85, watercolour on paper, or parchment, (size?), Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. min. 42, fol. 46r.

Fig. 107
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Helmeted Curassow* (*Pauxi pauxi*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 67.5 x 46 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1990Orn.). Photo: author, October 2008.

Fig. 108
Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Gallina dell' Indie* (Helmeted Curassow copied from Jacopo Ligozzi's original), watercolour on paper, 46.0 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.155.

Fig. 109
Jacopo Ligozzi, South American Blue and gold Macaw (*Ara ararauna*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 67x 45.6 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1997Orn.). Picture Source: Berti, Luciano, *Il Principe dello Studiolo: Francesco I de' Medici e la fine del Rinascimento fiorentino,* Firence: Editrice Edam, 1967, Col. Plate X.

Figs. 110 a-c
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa* (*Allactaga elater*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 26 x 34.1 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1959Orn.). Photo: author, October 2008.

Fig. 111
Jacopo Ligozzi, top - *Horned Viper* (*Cerastes cerastes*) bottom - Sahara sand viper or Avicenna viper (*Cerastes vipera*), 1577, chalk and coloured tempera on paper, 43.4 x 37.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1973 Orn). Picture source: Achidini Luchinat, Cristina [et al.], *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence,* New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002, Fig. 179, p.321.

Fig. 112
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Priest-fish* (*Uranoscopus scaber*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, heightened with gold; 41 x 28.5 cm , Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (2020 Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Fig. 113
Jacopo Ligozzi, *White Partridge* (*Lagopus mutus*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 42 x 33.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1991Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 114
Antonio Pisanello, Wild boar, ca.1435-45, watercolour and white heightening over black chalk or metalpoint, 14 x 20 cm, Paris: Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. 2417.

Fig. 115
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Collared Peccary* (*Dicotyles torquatus*), ca.1576/7-87, pen and gouache on paper, 45 x 66.5 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1961Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 116
Jacopo Ligozzi, Agouti (*Agouti paca*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 54.2 x 42.1 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1957Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Figs. 117 a-d
Jacopo Ligozzi, *White Partridge* (close-up details of Fig. 113), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 42 x 33.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1991Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 118
Jacopo Ligozzi , from left to right - Kingfisher (*Alcedo ispida*), Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) and a European common frog (*Rana temporaria*), between 1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 37.2 x 45 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1979 Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Fig. 119
Anonymous maker, Blue and gold Macaw (*Ara ararauna*), watercolour on paper, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.4.

Figs. 120 a-d
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Hazel Grouse* (*Tetrastes bonasia*), between 1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 40.3 x 32.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1992 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 121
Fronticepiece, Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae hoc est De avibus historiae libri XII ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo,* Tomus primus, Bononiae, apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599 (apud Ioannem Baptistam Bellagambam). http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/diglib.php?inv=26&term_ptnum=12&format=jpg&x=4&y=5 [03/06/2010]

Fig. 122
Blue-headed Quail-dove, in Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Vol. 2, Bononiae: apud Io.Bapt.Bellagamba,1600, p.482. http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/33 [08/08/2011].

Fig. 123
Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Blue-headed Quail-dove, 1550-85, watercolour on paper or parchment,Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. min. 42, fol. 41r. (bottom).

Fig. 124
Fronticepiece, Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae hoc est De avibus historiae libri XII ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo,* Vol.1, Bononiae, apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599 (apud Ioannem Baptistam Bellagambam). http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/diglib.php?inv=26&term_ptnum=13&format=jpg&x=6&y=3 [03/06/2010].

Fig. 125
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Pesce San Pietro* - John Dory (*Zeus faber*),1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour heightened with gold on paper, 27.7 x 39.7 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), *'corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (2015 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 126
John Dory (*Zeus faber*). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Zeus.faber.jpg [11/12/2010].

Fig. 127
Jacopo Ligozzi, bottom Sahara sand viper or Avicenna viper (*Cerastes vipera*), 47.5 x 36 cm Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7Vols, Ms, Vol. IV, c.132.

Fig. 128
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Bird of Paradise and Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree* (*Vidua macroura, Vidua paradisea, Hypochero chalybeata* ? / *Vidua chalybeata*?, *Ficus carica*), gouache and watercolour on paper, 67 x 45 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), *'corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn.,(1958 Orn.).

Fig. 129
Jacopo Ligozzi (attr.) Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*) on a branch of jujube tree (*ziziphus jujuba*), ca.1576/7-87 or 1590, 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, a., c.47.

Fig. 130
Jacopo Ligozzi (attr.), *Paradise bird (Vidua paradisea) and Exotic finch (Indigobird? - Hypochero chalybeata* ? / *Vidua chalybeata*?) on a branch of fig tree, ca.1576/7-87 or 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, a., c.48.

Fig. 131
Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Vol. 2, Bononiae: apud Io.Bapt.Bellagamba, 1600, p.566, http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/33 [08/08/2011].

Fig. 132 a
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Agouti*, ca.1576/7-87. For details see Fig. 116.

Fig. 132 b
Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Agouti* (copied from Jacopo Ligozzi original), 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.157.

Fig. 133 a
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa*, ca.1576/7-87. For details see Fig.110a.

Fig. 133b
Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa* (copied from Jacopo Ligozzi original), 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.156.

Fig. 134 a
Jacopo Ligozzi, Pin-tailed Whydah (Vidua macroura), 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.47.

Fig. 134b
Francesco Cavazzoni ('*delineatore*' - designer), Augusto Veneto ('*intagliatore*'- form-cutter), matrix for Fig.130a, 1585, incised wood, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, (matrix no. 614).

Fig. 134 c
Pin-tailed whydah (Vidua macroura), woodcut print with watercolour, Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Bononiae:apud Io.Bapt.Bellagamba,1600, p.565. http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/33 [08/08/2011].

Figs. 135 a-c
Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, top and centre - Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) male and female, bottom - Pale rock Sparrow (*Petronia brachydactyla*), (image slightly cropped), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 52.3 x 40 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1989 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 136 a
Jacopo Ligozzi, 'Indian' falcon (?), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 55 x 42.2 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1971 Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Fig. 136 b
Falconum Indicorum ('Indian' falcon (?)), woodcut print, in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae hoc est De auibus historiae libri 12. ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo*, Bononiae: Tebaldinus, 1637, p.494, http://gdz.sub.unigoettingen.de/dms/load/img/?PPN=PPN367611805&DMDID=dmdlog107 [03/06/2010].

Fig. 137
Falconum Indicorum ('Indian' falcon (?)), woodcut print and watercolour, in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae hoc est De auibus historiae libri 12. ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo*, Bononiae: apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599, p.494. http://amshistorica.cib.unibo.it/26 [03/06/2010].

Fig. 138
Porcus Americanus, woodcut print (see Jacopo Ligozzi's *Collared Peccary*, Fig. 115), Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Monstrorum historia cum Paralipomenis historiae omnium animalium: Bartholomaeus Ambrosinus ... labore, et studio volumen composuit. Marcus Antonius Bernia in lucem edidit. Proprijs sumptibus ... cum indice copiosissimo*, Bologna, 1642, p.139.

Fig. 139
Aldrovandi's classification table, in Ashworth, Jr., William B., 'Natural history and the emblematic world view', in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. by David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp.303-332, (p.314).

Figs. 140 a-c
After designs by Bernardino Poccetti, Jacopo Ligozzi and Daniel Froeschel, *Tabletop with Vases, Grape Clusters, Ears of Wheat and birds*, 1603-1610, pietre dure mosaic on a base of oriental chalcedony, 95 x 84 cm, Florence: *Galleria Palatina*, Palazzo Pitti, Inv. Oggetti d'Arte, 1911, n.1512.

Fig. 140d
Jacopo Ligozzi, *Bird of Paradise and Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree*, 1958 Orn. For details see Fig.128.

Fig. 141
Designed by Jacopo Ligozzi, executed by Giovanni Battista Sassi, *Table of Flowers*, 1617-19, *pietra dura* and surrounding boarder made from petrified wood, 113 x 160 cm, Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi. ARTstor Collection Italian and other European Art (Scala Archives), Image and original data provided by SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y. http://www.artstor.org.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/index.shtml [2010-2011].

Fig. 142
Illustrations showing the process of *commesso* inlay, source of information and pictures: Giusti, Annamaria, *Pietre Dure and the Art of Florentine Inlay*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2006, Ch.7: 'How a Florentine Mosaic is born', pp.253-255.

Fig. 143 a
Daniel Fröschel, *Cardinal birds* (*Cardinalis virginianus*), gouache on paper, 42 x 27.8 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', Vol. 2, folio 155.
http://www.filosofia.unibo.it/aldrovandi/pinakesweb/imagebrowse.asp?showframe=True&fileid=153&compid=3421&complabel=Volume+composto+da+156+figure+di+uccelli%2E%2E%2E&shelfmark=Tavole+vol%2E+002+Animali [13/07/2010].

Fig. 143b
Detail of Fig.140a showing motif of Cardinal bird.

Fig. 144
Parrot on a Branch of Pear Tree, seventeenth century, pietre dure mosaic, 20 x 31 cm, Florence: Museo dell'Opificio dell Pietre Dure, 1905n. 472. Picture Source: Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, and Gretchen, A. Hirschauer, *The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici*, (exhib. cat.), Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002, p.67.

Fig. 145
Jacopo Ligozzi, *African Ring-necked Parakeet (Psittacula krameri) perched on a Plum Branch (Prunus domestica)*, 1576/7-87, gouache on paper, 55 x 42 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano*', 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1952 Orn.). Picture source: Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, and Gretchen, A. Hirschauer, *The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici*, (exhib. cat.), Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002, p.50.

Fig. 146
Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with geometric forms and a parrot on a cherry tree branch*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra tenere*, 62 x 72.5 cm, *Villa Medici della Petraia*, Inv. ODA 1911, n.200: Picture source: Colle, Enrico, Gonzàlez-Palacios and Kirsten Aschengreen Piacenti, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti: Il Periodo dei Medici 1537-1737*, Florence: Centro Di: Umberto Allemandi & C.,1996, p.140, Pl. 28.

Fig. 147
Grand-ducal Workshops, *Tabletop ornamented with flowers and panoplies and parrot* (central detail only), *pietra dura*, early seventeenth century, Hillerød: Frederiksborg Castle. Picture source: Giusti, Annamaria, *Pietre Dure and the Art of Florentine Inlay*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2006, pp.62-3, Plate 47.

Fig. 148
Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 85 x 116.5 cm, Florence: Museo degli Argenti, Palazzo Pitti. Picture Source: Gonzàles-Palacios, Alvar, *Il tempio del Gusto. Il Granducato di Toscana e gli Stati Settentrionali: Le Arti Decorative in Italia fra Classicismi e Barocco*, 2 Vols, Milano: Longanesi, 1986, Vol. II, pp.103-4, Plate 169.

Fig. 149
Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 88 x 118 cm, present location unknown. Picture Source: Gonzàles-Palacios, Alvar, *Il tempio del Gusto. Il Granducato di Toscana e gli Stati Settentrionali: Le Arti Decorative in Italia fra Classicismi e Barocco*, 2 Vols, Milano: Longanesi, 1986, Vol. II, pp.103-5, Plate170.

Fig. 150
Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 107 x 152 cm, Madrid: Museo del Prado. Picture Source: Gonzàles-Palacios, Alvar, *Il tempio del Gusto. Il Granducato di Toscana e gli Stati Settentrionali: Le Arti Decorative in Italia fra Classicismi e Barocco*, 2 Vols, Milano: Longanesi, 1986, Vol. II, pp.103-5, Plate 171.

Figs. 151 a-e
Jacopo Ligozzi, Four birds, from top to bottom: 1) unidentified, Great reed warbler, (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*), Yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 52.7 x 39.2 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1983 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Figs. 152 a-c
Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, from top to bottom: Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*, male), Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*, female), crested lark (*Galerida cristata*) (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 47 x 33.3 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1982 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Figs. 153 a-c
Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, top great tit (*Parus major*), centre European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), bottom Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 52.5 x 36.9 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1994 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Figs. 154 a-d
Tabletop with Landscape and birds, Grand-ducal workshop, first half of the seventeenth century, semi-precious hardstone, (no dimensions provided), Florence: Private Collection. Picture Source: Giusti, Annamaria, *Pietre Dure and the Art of Florentine Inlay*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2006, pp. 85-6).

Fig. 155
Jacopo Ligozzi, Long-eared owl (*Strix bubo*) (detail), 1576/7-87, gouache on paper, 66.5 x 45.7cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1986 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Figs. 156 a-c
Francesco Fanelli (designer) and Benotti, Domenico (maker), *The John Evelyn Cabinet* (*Pietra dura* cabinet formerly belonging to the English diarist John Evelyn), Cabinet: Florence, 1644-1646; stand: England, ca. 1830; Veneered with ebony on a pine carcase, with oak drawer linings; inlaid with panels of Florentine *pietre dure*, contemporary and later bronze mounts, London: Victoria and Albert Museum, British Galleries, Museum number: W.24:1 to 23-1977.

Figs. 157 a-b
Pietra dura cabinet: Florence, first half of the seventeenth century; cabinet: northern Europe, mid-seventeenth century; stand: England, c. 1750; *pietre dure*, ebonised wood and gilt base, cabinet: 57.5 x 89.5 x 35.6 cm; stand: 80 x 97.8 x 41.9 cm, London: Gilbert Collection. Pictorial Source: Massinelli, Anna Maria and Jeanette Hanisee Gabriel, *The Gilbert Collection Hardstones*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers in association with The Gilbert Collection, 2000, pp.32-35.

Figs. 158 a-b
Pietra dura and cabinet: Florence, Grand Ducal workshop, third quarter seventeenth century; stand: England, first half of nineteenth century; *pietre dure*, jasper, lapis lazuli, marble, ebony, marquetry of exotic woods, rosewood, brass, gilt bronze, gilt brass, silk; cabinet: 56.5 x 115. 9 x 40.3 cm; stand: 80.0 x 129.5 x 42.5 cm, London: Gilbert Collection. Pictorial Source: Massinelli Anna Maria and Jeanette Hanisee Gabriel, *The Gilbert Collection Hardstones*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers in association with The Gilbert Collection, 2000, pp.38-40.

Figs. 159 a-b
Pietra dura and cabinet: Florence, first half of the seventeenth century; cabinet and stand: England, late eighteenth century, Mahogany, *pietre dure*, brass, northern Europe, mid-seventeenth century; stand: England, c. 1750; *pietre dure*, ebonised wood and gilt base, cabinet: 71.1 x 86.8 x 42.1 cm; stand: 78. 4 x 39.4 x 80.6 cm, London: Gilbert Collection. Pictorial Source: Massinelli, Anna Maria and Jeanette Hanisee Gabriel, *The Gilbert Collection Hardstones*, London: Philip Wilson Publishers in association with The Gilbert Collection, 2000, pp.36-37.

CHAPTER 5
The zoological paintings created by Bartolomeo Bimbi and Pietro Neri Scacciati for the Villa Medici Villa Medici Ambrogiana: a veritable painted menagerie or an inventory of a regime in decline?

Fig. 160
Giusto Utens, *Medici Villa and Garden l'Ambrogiana*, 1599, tempera on canvas, 144 x 239 cm, 1 of 17 lunettes commissioned by Ferdinando I, Florence: Museo '*Firenze com'era*'. SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y. http://www.artstor.org.ezproxy.sussex.ac.uk/index.shtml [2010-2011].

Fig. 161
Engraving of the Villa Medici Ambrogiana, F. Fontani, *Viaggio pittorico della Toscana*, Firenze: V. Batelli, 1827 (3 ed.).© Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza / Eurofoto, http://brunelleschi.imss.fi.it/itinerari/immagine/img438.html [18/02/2011].

Fig. 162
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Garland of Flowers with two Swallows*, ca.1690-1695, oil on canvas, 106 x 87 cm, Florence: Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Inv. n. 928. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.53.

Fig. 163
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Three views of a Chinese Golden pheasant* (*Fagiano dorato della Cina in tre vedute*), 1708, oil on canvas, 109 x 140cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4931. Picture Source: Meloni Trkulja, Silvia, Lucia Tongiorgi Tomasi, *Bartolomeo Bimbi: Un pittore di Piante e animali alla corte dei Medici*, Firenze: Edifir, 1998, p.191.

Fig. 164
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Pears*, 1699, oil on canvas, 169 x 227cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta. Inv. Castello, n. 611, Photo: Studio Fotografico Tosi, Florence. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.75.

Figs. 165 a-b
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Lamb with two heads* (*Agnello a due teste*), 1721, oil on canvas, 58 x 72 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4854. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.143 (Inscription transcript, p.142).

Fig. 166
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Calf with two heads resting* (*Vitella con due teste, accosciata*),1719, oil on canvas, 95.2 x 118.7 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4984. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.131 (Inscription transcript, p.130).

Fig. 167
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Calf with two heads, standing* (*Vitella con due teste, a piedi*), 1719, oil on canvas, 95 x 118 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4930. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.133 (Inscription transcript, p.132).

Fig. 168
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Squash from the Grand Ducal Garden at Pisa*, 1711, oil on canvas, 95 x 138.5 cm, Florence: Sezione Botanica 'F. Parlatore' del Museo di Storia Naturale, University of Florence, 1930 n.361. Picture source: Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, and Gretchen, A. Hirschauer, *The Flowering of Florence: Botanical Art for the Medici* (exhib.cat), Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002, p.100.

Fig. 169
Bartolomeo Bimbi (attr.), *Two views of a heron taken from the 'Giardino de' Semplici'* (*Guacco dell'orto del Giardino dei Semplici*), 1719, oil on canvas, 74 x 59 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4987. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.135 (Inscription transcript, p.134).

Fig. 170
Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Two views of a heron taken from the Garden of Santissima Annunziata* (*Guacco dell'orto della nunciata*), 1720, oil on canvas, 98 x 79 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4708. Picture Source: Ciascu, Stefano ed. [et al], *Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Museo della Natura Morta: Catalogo dei Dipinti*, Livorno: Sillabe, 2009, p.137, (Inscription transcript, p.136).

Fig. 171
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ILLUSTRATIONS - INTRODUCTION

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Fig. 2 Salmon-crested cockatoo, Bruno Tozzi, *Ornithologiae vivis coloribus expressae*, 4 Volumes, 1729, Florence: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Conventi Soppressi, Ms. C.S.A.I.830, Vol. III, c.60.[1]

[1] Under Cosimo III, Bruno Tozzi (1656-1743), a monk from the Benedictine monastery at Vallombrosa, was commissioned to oversee and help create the *Ornithologiae vivis coloribus expressae.* The work above is one of several hundreds of tempera paintings created by various artists and collated in four manuscript volumes. Jacopo Ligozzi's paintings created the inspiration for numerous of these; however, the above painting almost certainly takes as its inspiration Bimbi's portrayal of the *Pappagallo bianco* in Fig. 1. Tongiorgi Tomasi, Lucia, 'The study of the natural sciences and botanical and zoological illustration in Tuscany under the Medicis from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries', *Archives of Natural History,* Vol. 28, No. 2 (2001), 179-193 (188-90).

Fig. 3a Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi,* 1459-62, fresco, tempera and oil, east wall, Florence: Chapel, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

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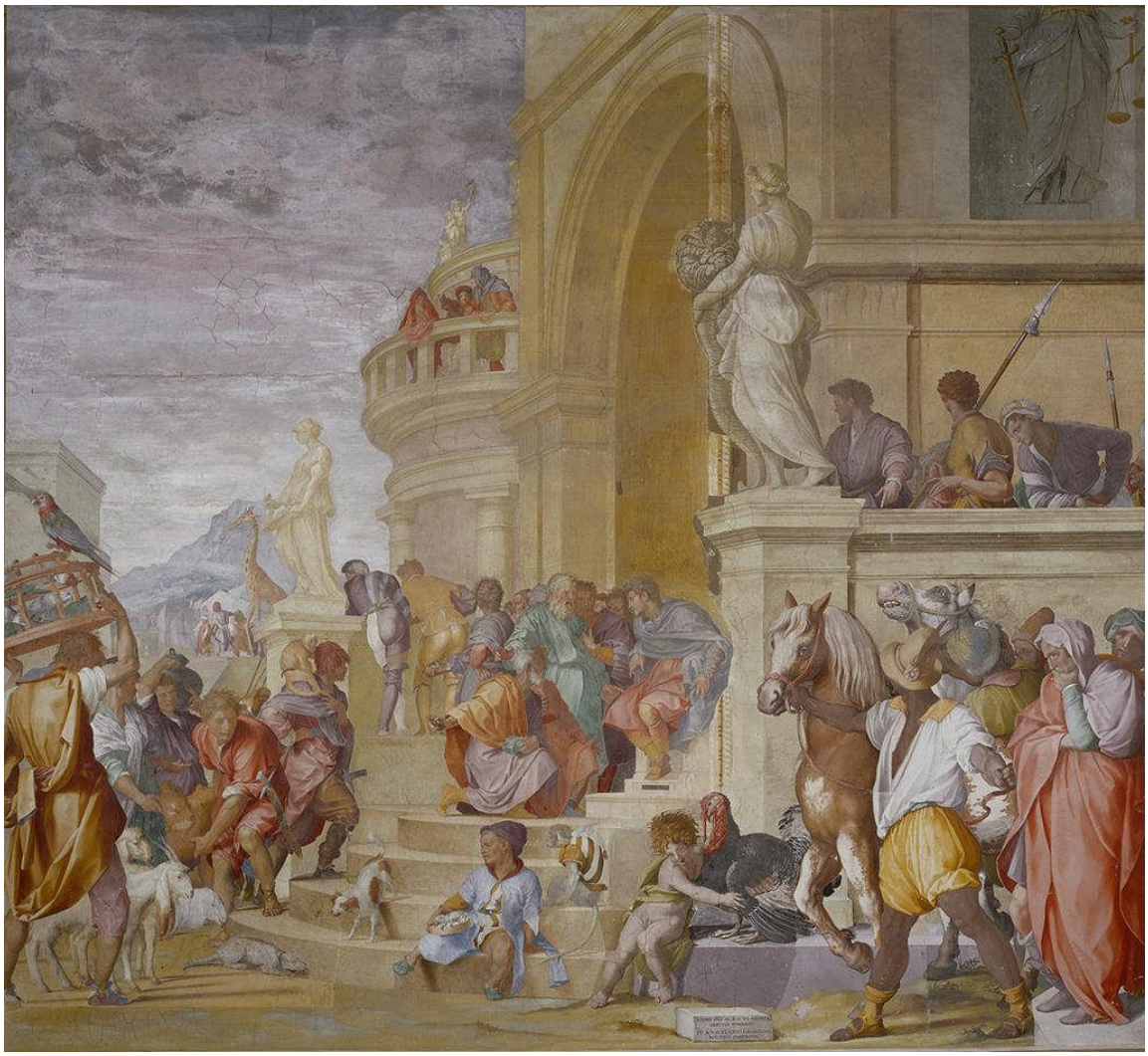

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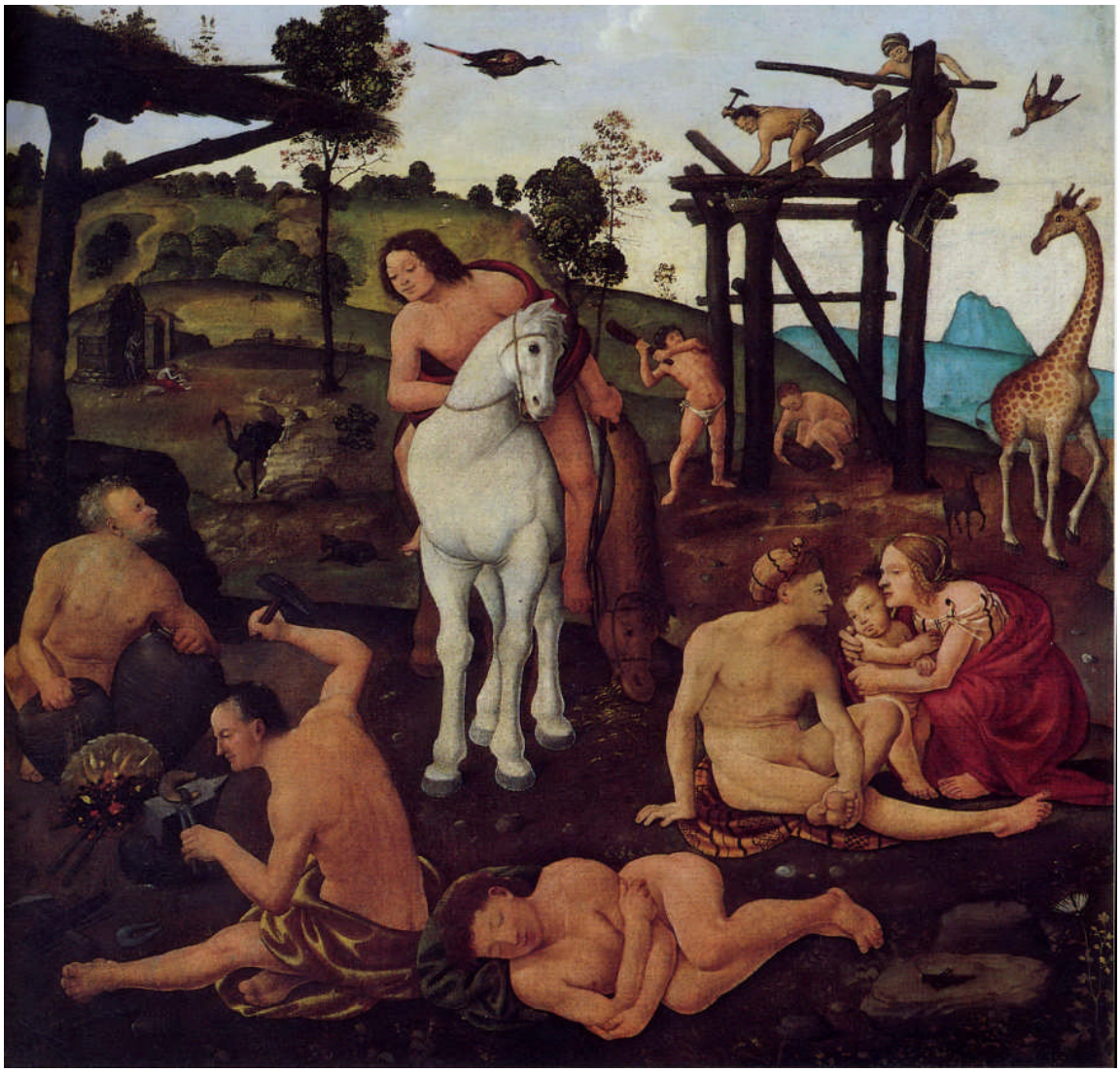

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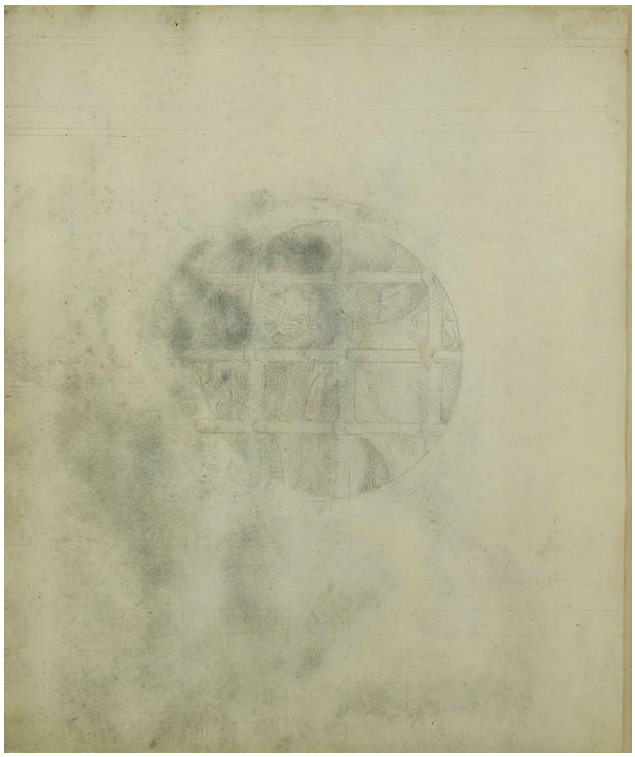

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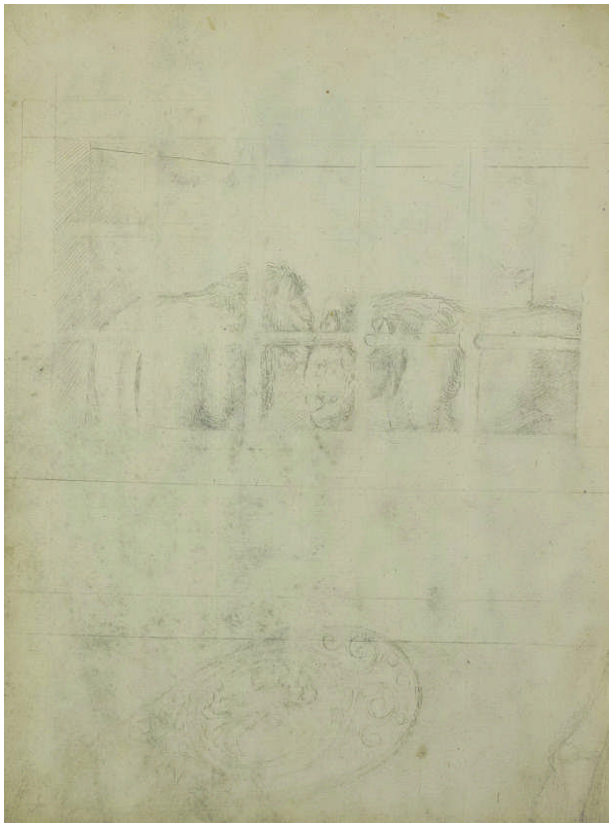

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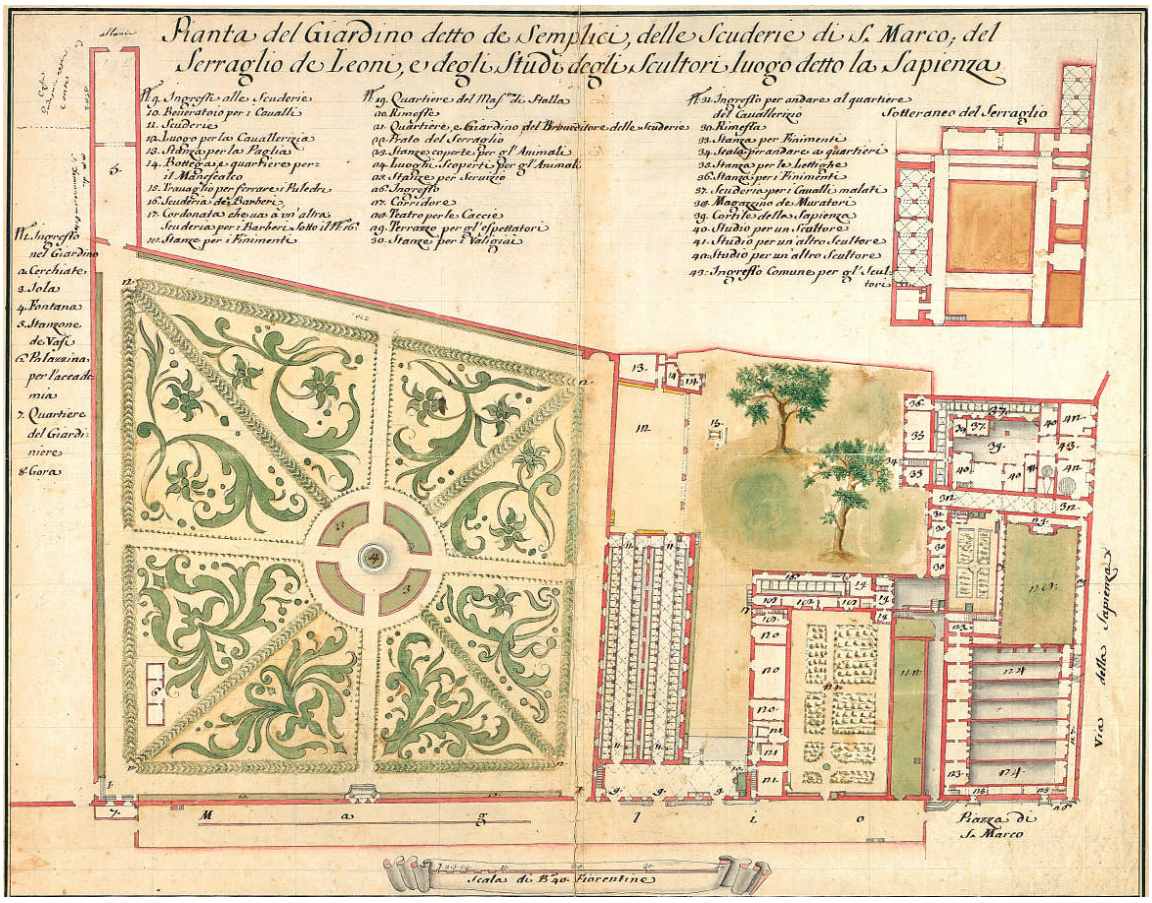

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Fig. 19 Monte di Giovanni, An image from a missal created for the Baptistery of Florence, showing the Annunciation and a view of the Piazza San Marco in Florence, 1509-1510, 38 x 27 cm, Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Barb. Lat. 610, c.7 r.

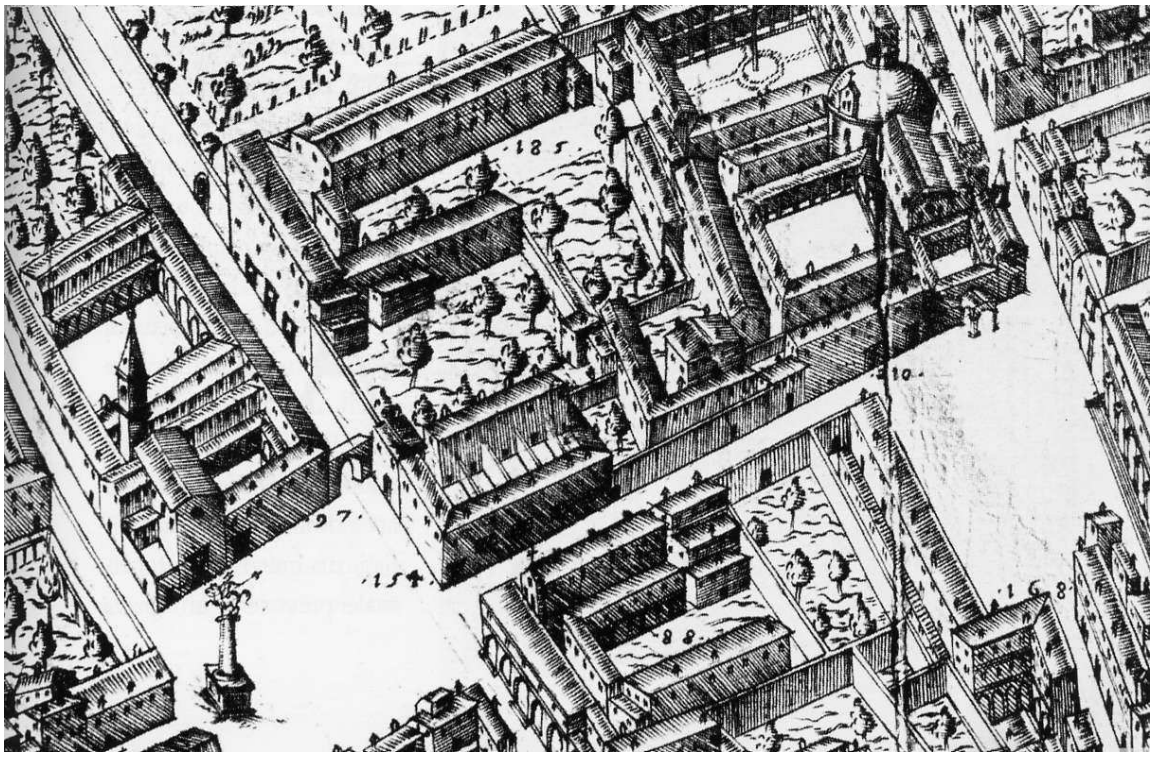

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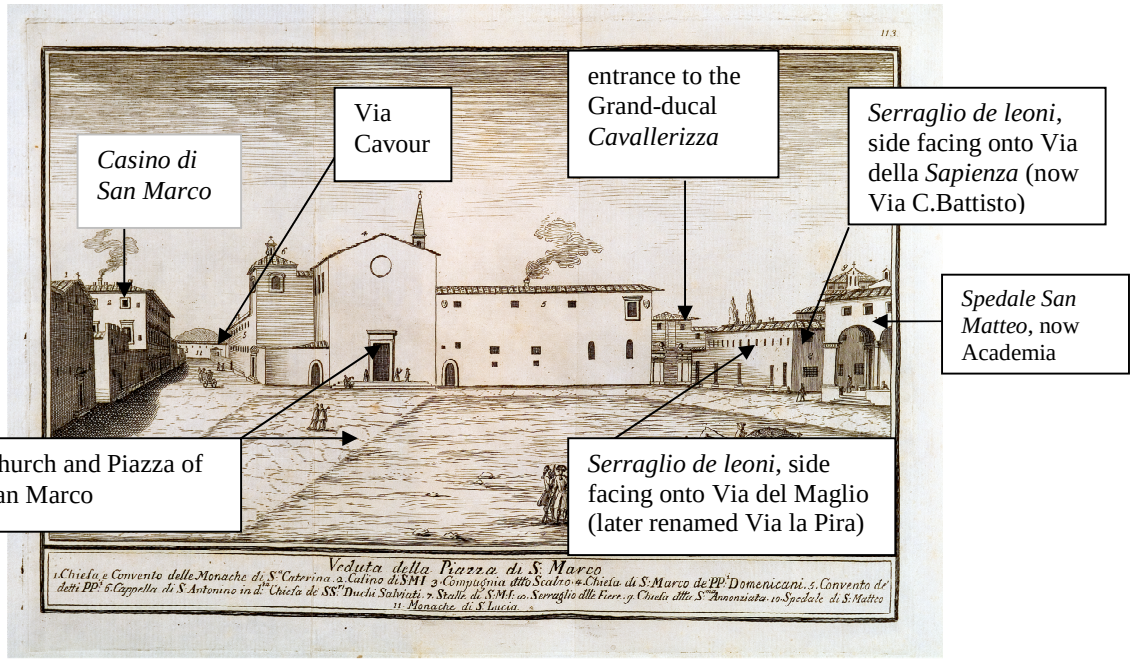
Fig. 21a Andrea Scacciati, *Veduta della Piazza San Marco*, 1725-1771, engraving, Florence: Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*', Inventory: MFCE 2001-3784/OBLA. This image reproduced in Giuseppe, Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine, divise ne's suoi quartieri / opera di Giuseppe Richa della Compagnia di Gesú*, 10 Vols, Firenze: P. G. Viviani, 1754-62, Vol. VII, p.113.



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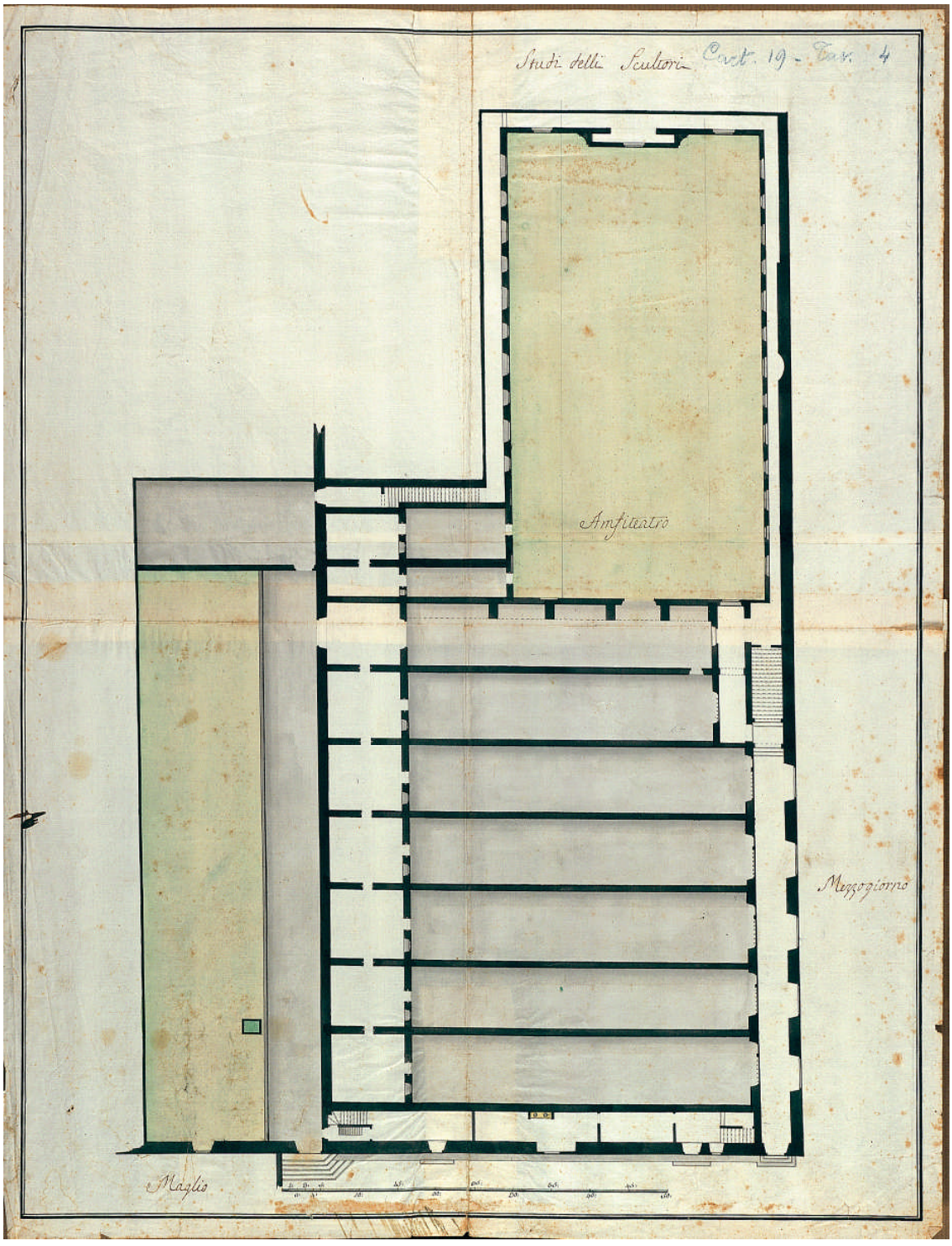

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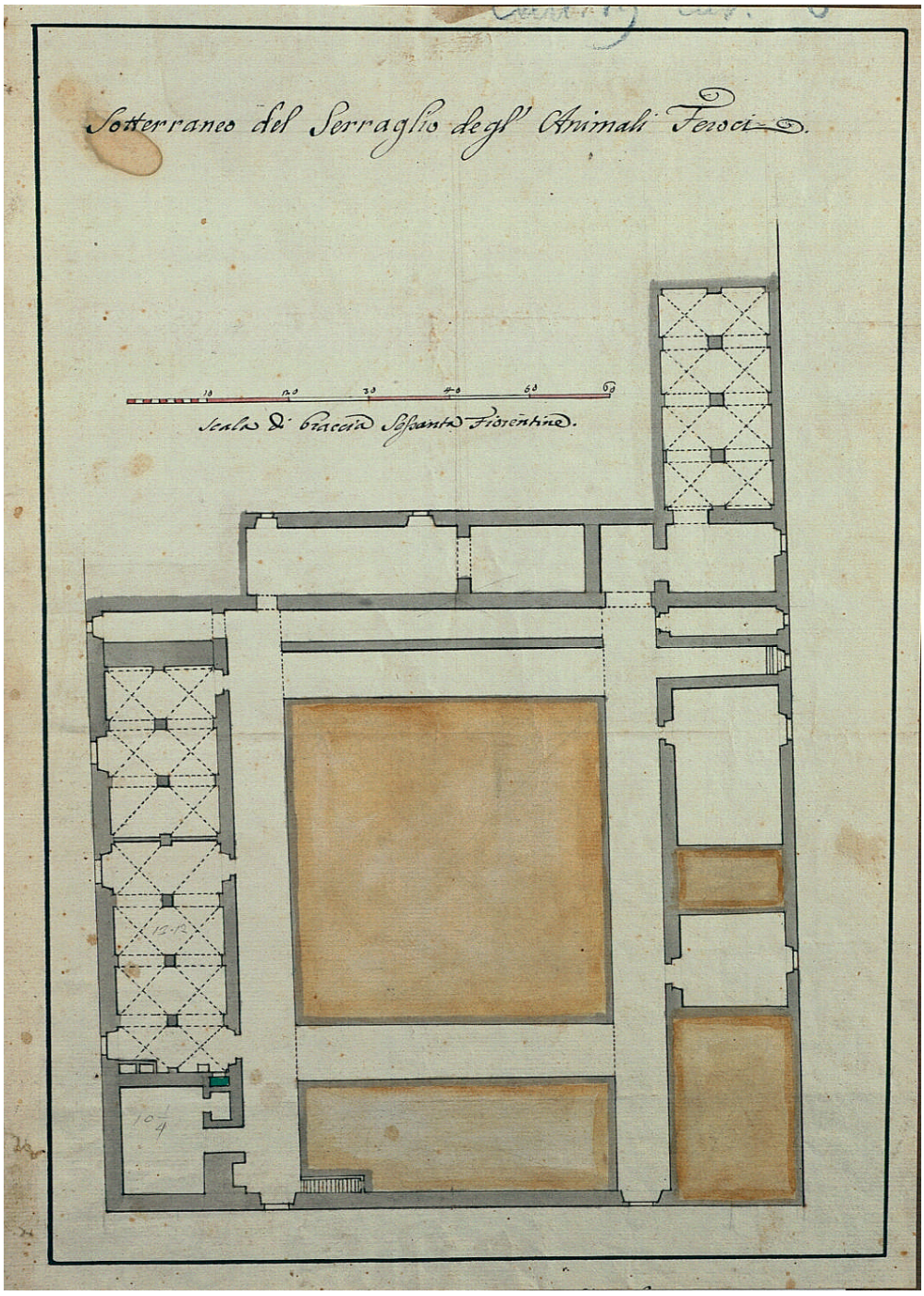

Fig. 24 Inscription: *Sotterraneo del Serraglio degl'Animali Feroci*, Plan showing the underground floor of the *Serraglio de leoni*, maker unknown, ca.1740 - 1750, ink and watercolour on opaque card, 36 x 25.8 cm, Florence: Archivio Storico del Comune di Firence (ASCF), Fondo disegni tecnici del Comune di Firenze, amfce 0702, cass. 21, ins. C.

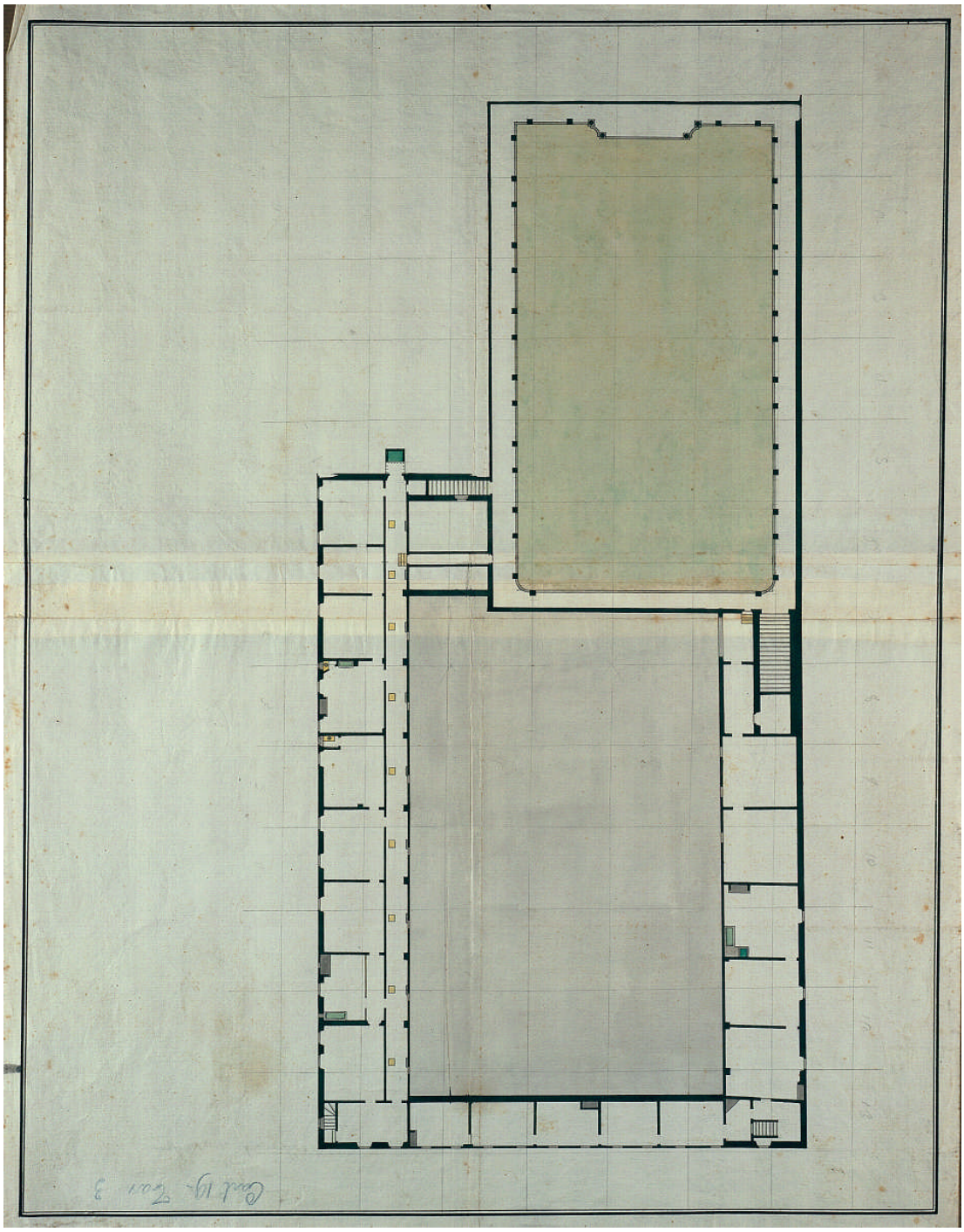

Fig. 25 Plan showing the first floor of the *Serraglio de leoni* and the amphitheatre, maker unknown, ca.1790 - 1810, ink and watercolour on opaque paper, 58.5 x 45.6 cm, Florence: Archivio Storico del Comune di Firence (ASCF), Fondo disegni tecnici del Comune di Firenze, amfce 0700, cass. 21, ins. C.

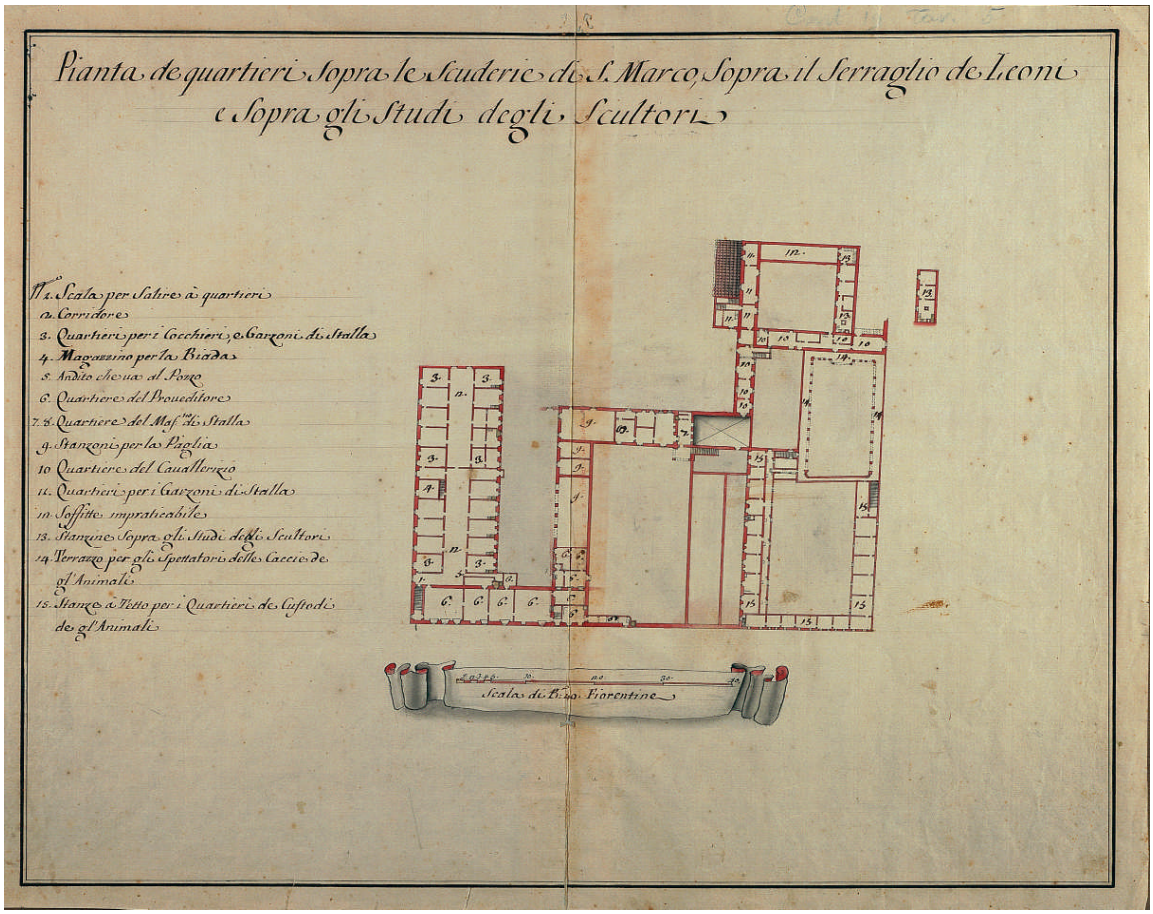

Fig. 26 Inscription: *Pianta de quartieri sopra le Scuderie di S. Marco, sopra il Serraglio de Leoni e sopra gli Studi degli Scultori*, Floor plan with key, showing the rooms on the floor above the Grand-ducal stables, the Lion house and the Sculptors' studios, maker unknown, ca.1790 -1810, pen and watercolour on opaque paper, 47 x 59 cm, Florence: Archivio Storico del Comune di Firence (ASCF), Fondo disegni tecnici del Comune di Firenze, amfce 0695, cass. 21, ins. C.

Fig. 27 Jan van der Straet (Giovanni Stradano), *Noblemen Watch Combat of Wild Beasts in an Indoor Circus*, from Jan van der Straet's *Venationes ferarum, avium, piscium: Pugnae bestiariorum: & mutuae bestiarum*, engraved by Jan Collaert and published by Philippe Galle (Antwerp, 1566-1628).

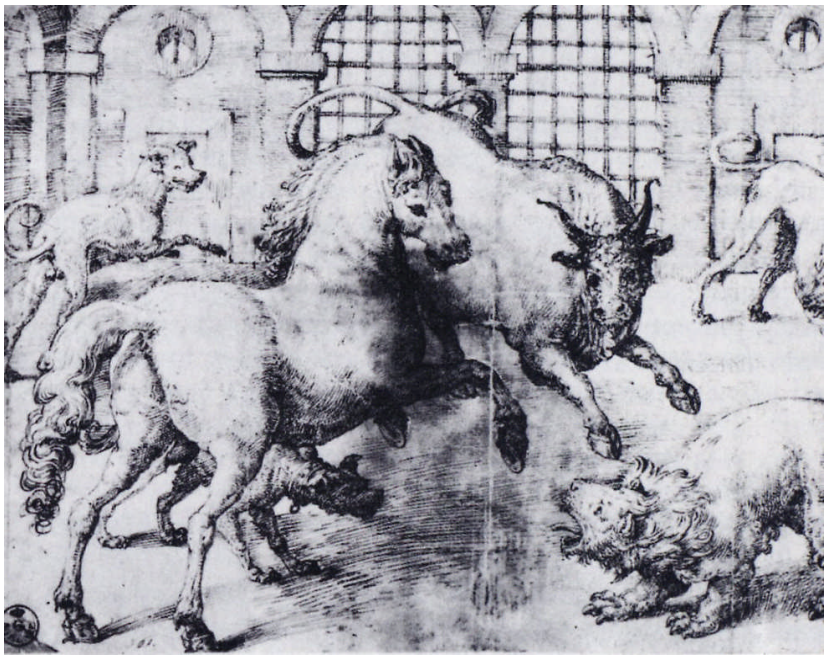

Fig. 28 Giovanni Stradano, *Combat between a lion and other animals*, 1580, pen and ink drawing, Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), 852 Orn.

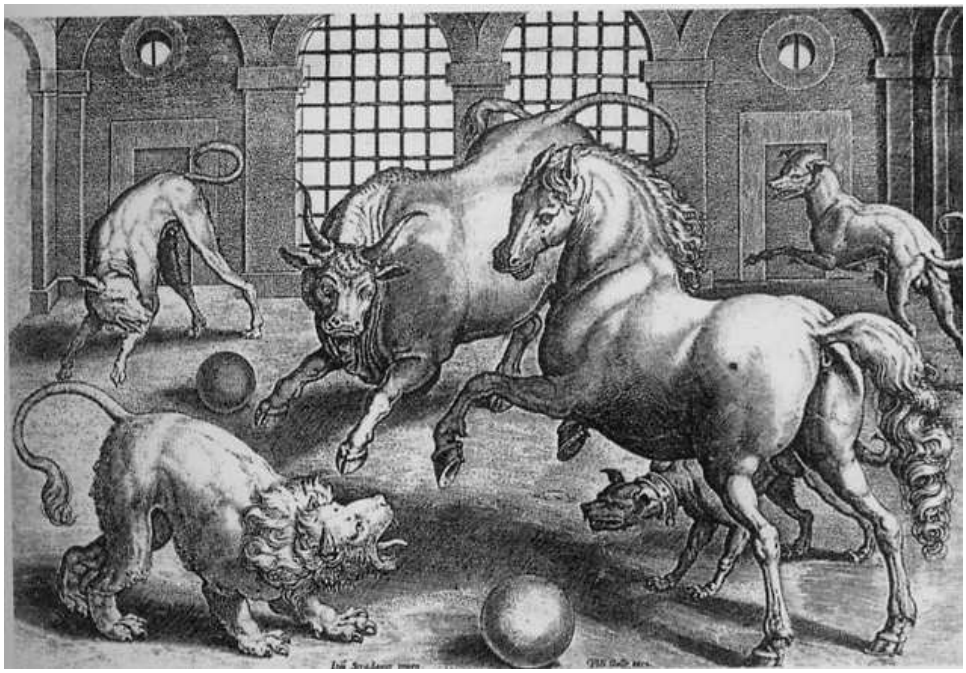

Fig. 29 *Combat between a lion and other animals*, from Jan van der Straet's *Venationes ferarum, avium, piscium: Pugnae bestiariorum: & mutuae bestiarum*, engraved by Jan Collaert and published by Philippe Galle (Antwerp, 1566-1628).

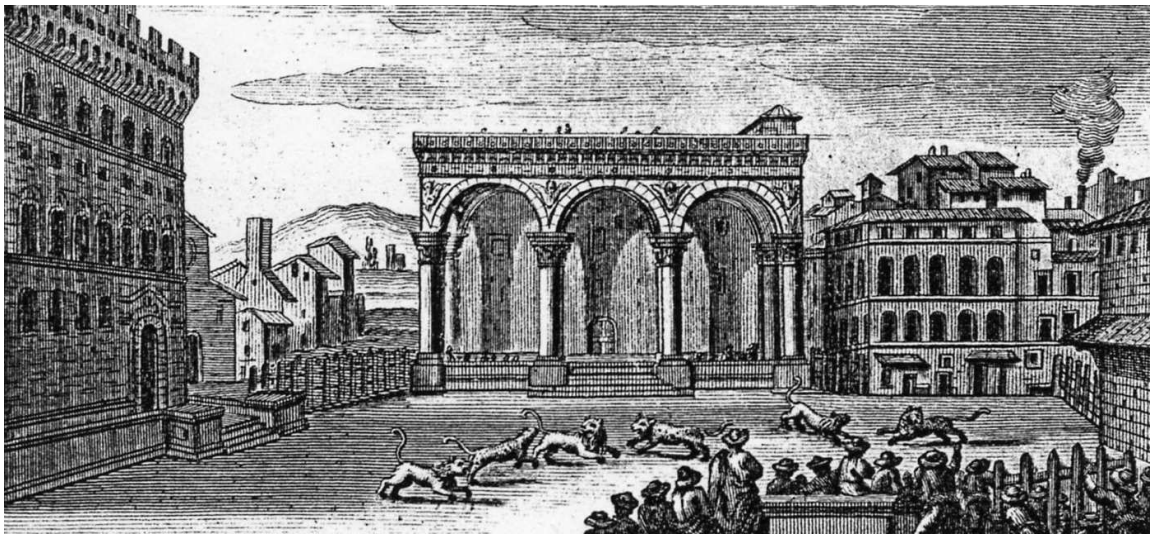

Fig. 30 *Lion hunt in front of the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence*, frontispiece in Muratori, Lodovico Antonio & Volpi, Guglielmo's *Ricordi di Firenze dell' anno 1459 di autore anonimo,* Vol. II , p.724, reproduced in Loisel**,** Gustave, *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours*, 3 Vols, Paris: Octave Doin et Fils,1912; Vol. I, p. 207.

The image relates to a poem celebrating the events of the visit to Florence in 1459 of Galeazzo Maria Sforza and Pope Pius II, during which a famous *caccia* (animal combat) between lions and other beasts was organized in the Piazza della Signoria.

Fig. 31 A range of sculpted heads of lions that decorate the bases of the ground-floor windows at the Palazzo Pitti. Picture Source: Del Meglio, Alessandro, Maria Carchio, Roberto Manescalchi, *Il Marzocco: The Lion of Florence* Florence: Edizioni Grafica European Center of Fine Arts, 2005, pp.98/173, Pl. 72.

Fig. 32 Designed by Giovanni Stradano, woven by Giovanni Sconditti, *Arquebus Hunt of the Wild Boar*, 1566, tapestry, Florence: Repository of Palazzo Vecchio. SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 33a Giusto Utens, *Medici Villa and Garden at Pratolino (Villa di Pratolino)*, 1598-99, tempera on canvas, 145 x 245 cm, 1 of 17 lunettes commissioned by Ferdinando I, Florence: Museo '*Firenze com'era*'. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

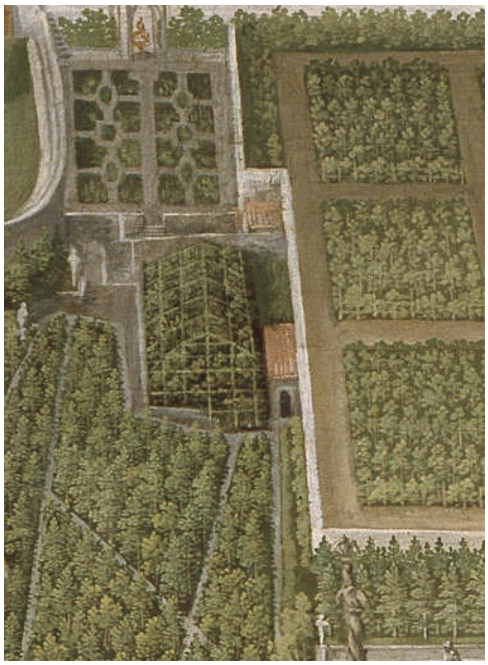

Fig. 33b Detail of Fig. 33a showing the *Grande Voliera*.

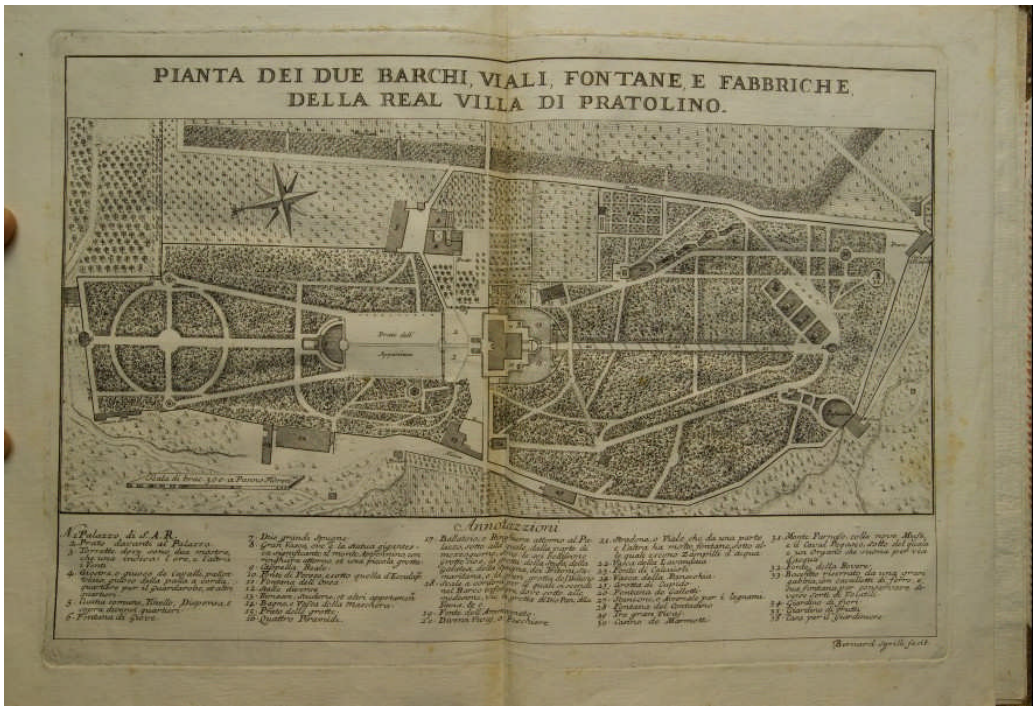

Fig. 34a Sgrilli, Bernardo Sansone, 'Pianta dei due Barchi, Viali, Fontane, e Fabbriche della Real Villa di Pratolino', *in Descrizione della Regia Villa, fontane e fabbriche di Pratolino,* Florence, 1742, p.53.

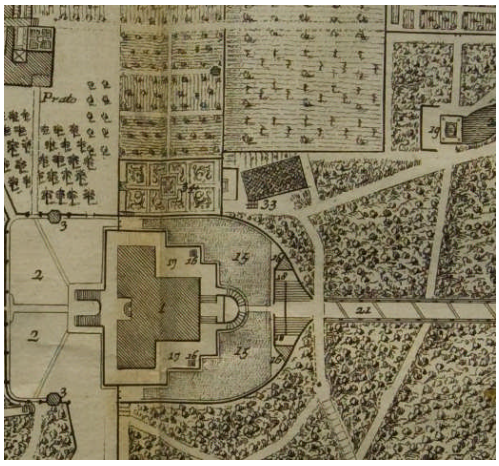

Fig. 34b Detail of Fig.34 a showing the *Grande Voliera*.

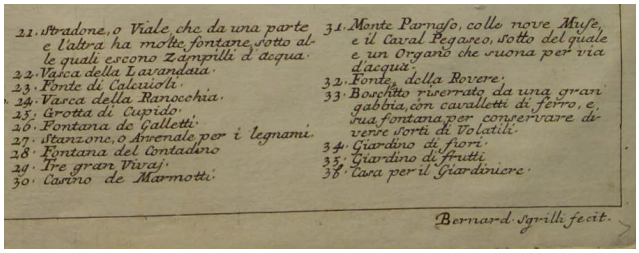

Fig. 34c Detail of Fig.34 a showing part of the key.

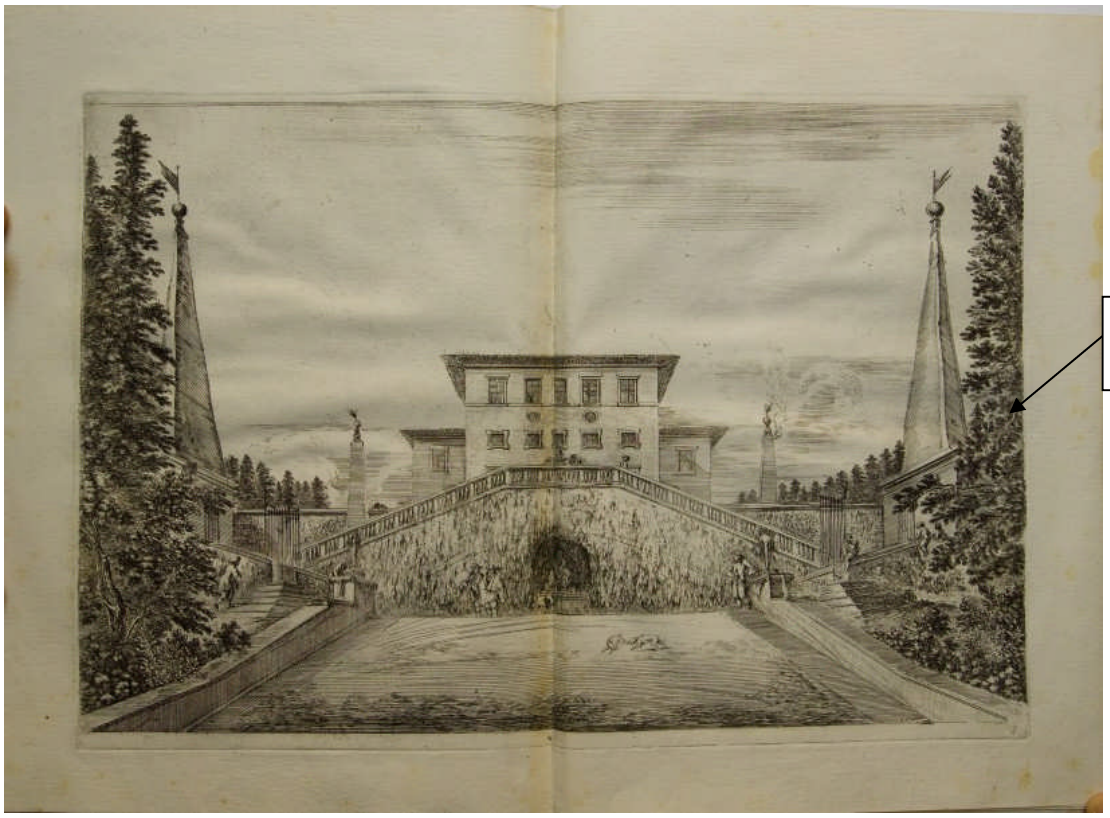

Fig. 35 Sgrilli, Bernardo Sansone, *Descrizione della Regia Villa, fontane e fabbriche di Pratolino,* Florence, 1742, p. 39.

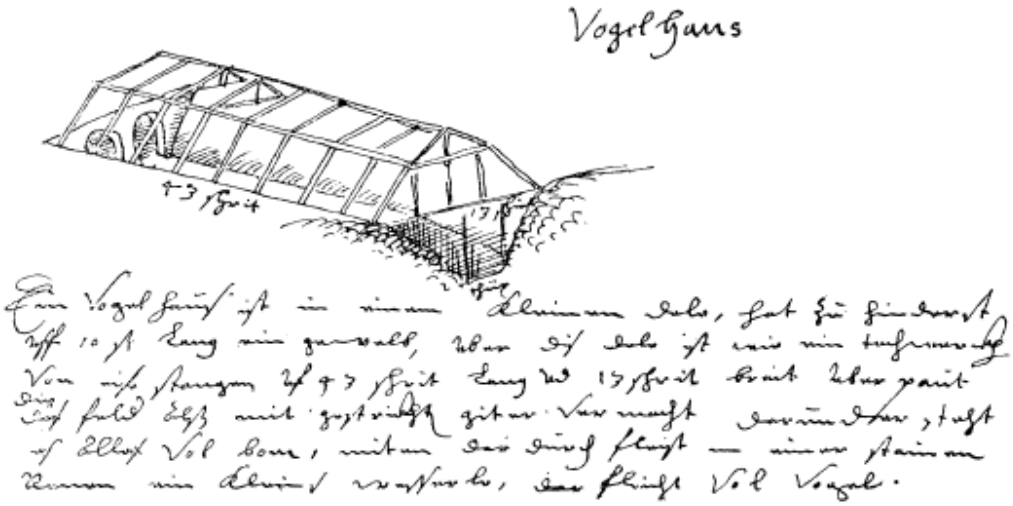

Fig. 36 Hülsen, Christian, 'Ein deutscher Architekt in Florenz (1600)', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz,* 2. Bd., Vols. 5/6 (1917), 152-193, p. 175. Abb.17.

Fig. 37 The *Grande Voliera* following the restoration conducted by Demidoff. Image source: Zangheri, Luigi, *Pratolino, il Giardino delle Meravigli*e, 2 Vols, Firenze: Gonnelli, 1979, Vol. II, p. 215, Plate 215.

Fig. 38 Francesco and Raffaello Petrini, *Pianta della Catena* (Painted map of Florence copied from a woodcut attributed to Francesco di Lorenzo Rosselli of 1471-1482, which is in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Kupferstichkabinett), (detail showing the Palazzo Pitti in the centre), 1887, Tempera on canvas, Florence: Museo Storico Topografico '*Firenze com'era*', Inventory: MFCE 2001-3936/OBLA.

Fig. 39 Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Stradanus, *The Siege of Florence* (detail showing the hills south of the Arno with the Palazzo Pitti on the left), 1556-61, fresco, Florence: Palazzo Vecchio, *Sala di Clemente VII, Quartiere di Leone X*. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

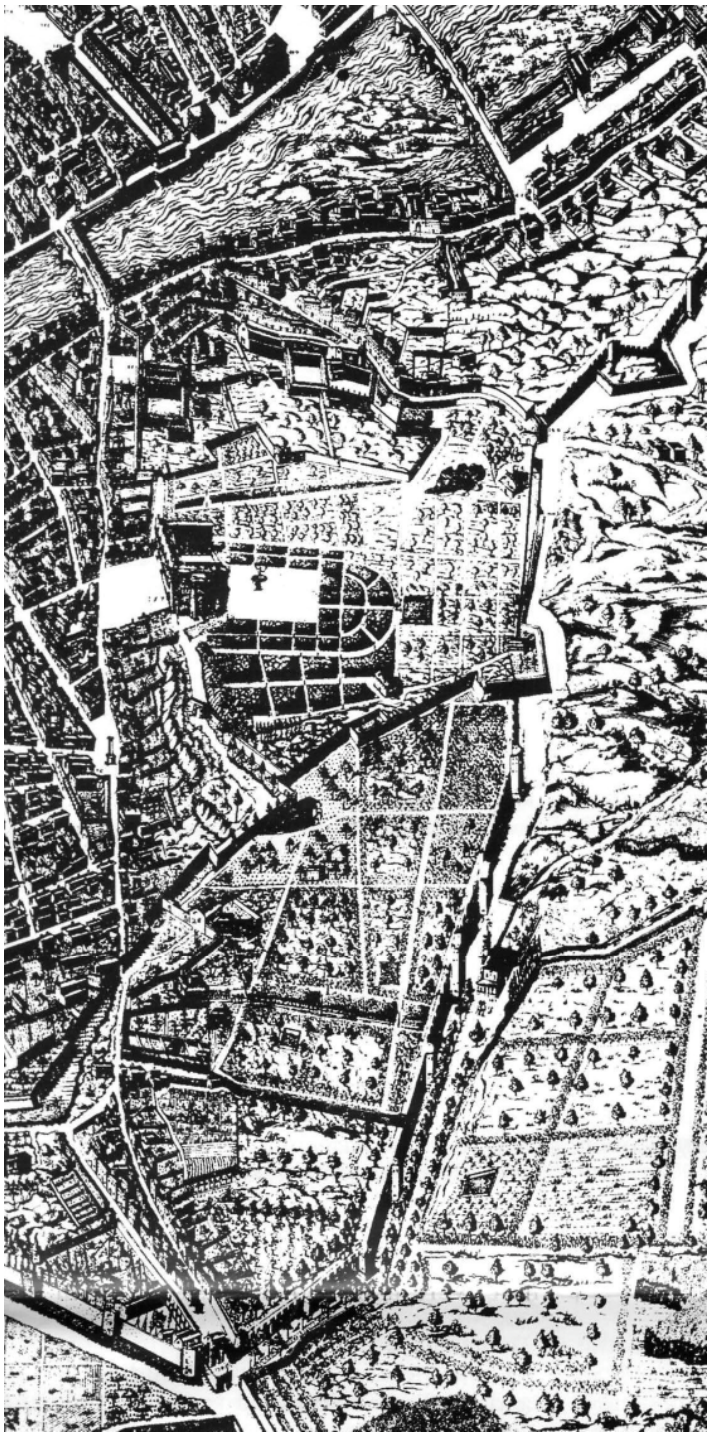

Fig. 40 Stefano Bonsignori (designer), Bonaventura Billocardi (engraver), *Nova pulcherrimae civitatis Florentiae topographia accuratissime delineata*, (detail of the Boboli Garden), 1575/6-1584, copper engraving with watercolour on nine sheets of paper, 126.5 x 137 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, inv.2614, st. sc.

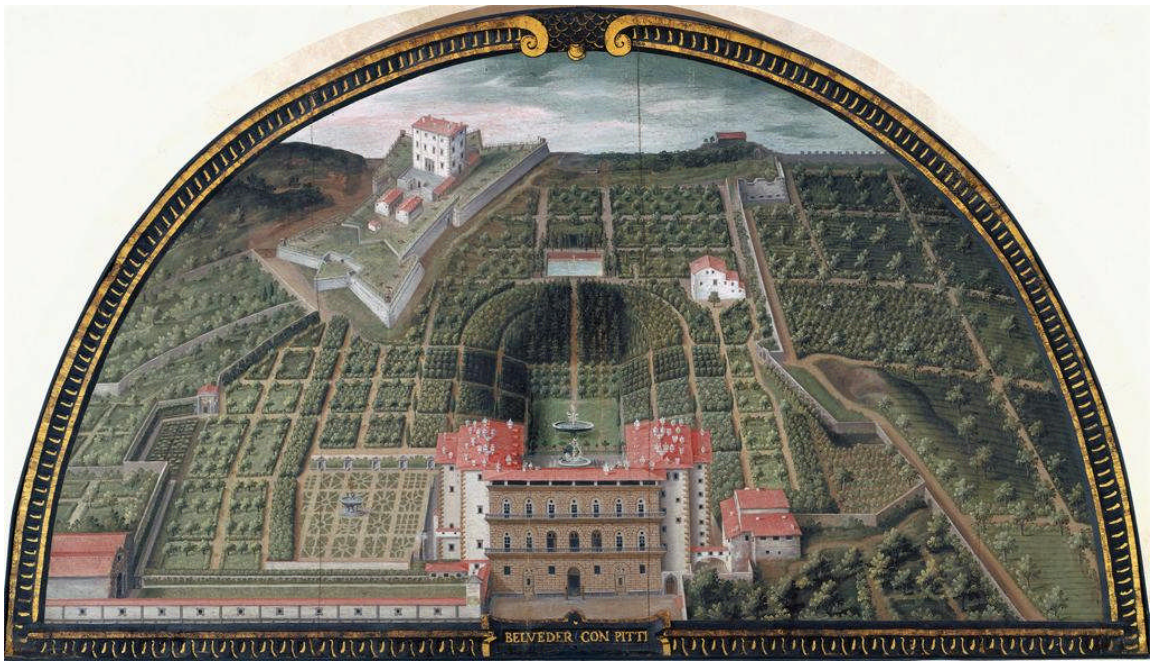

Fig. 41 Giusto Utens, *Palazzo Pitti and Belvedere*, 1599, tempera on canvas, 143 x 285 cm, 1 of 17 lunettes commissioned by Ferdinando I, Florence: Museo '*Firenze com'era*'. SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 42 Bernardino Poccetti, animals appearing in the decorations of the vaulted ceiling in the *Grotta Grande*, 1586-87, fresco, Florence: the Boboli Gardens (Photo: author, October 2008).

Fig. 43 Bernardino Poccetti, animals appearing in the decorations of the vaulted ceiling in the *Grotta Grande*, 1586-87, fresco, Florence: the Boboli Gardens (Photo: author, October 2008).

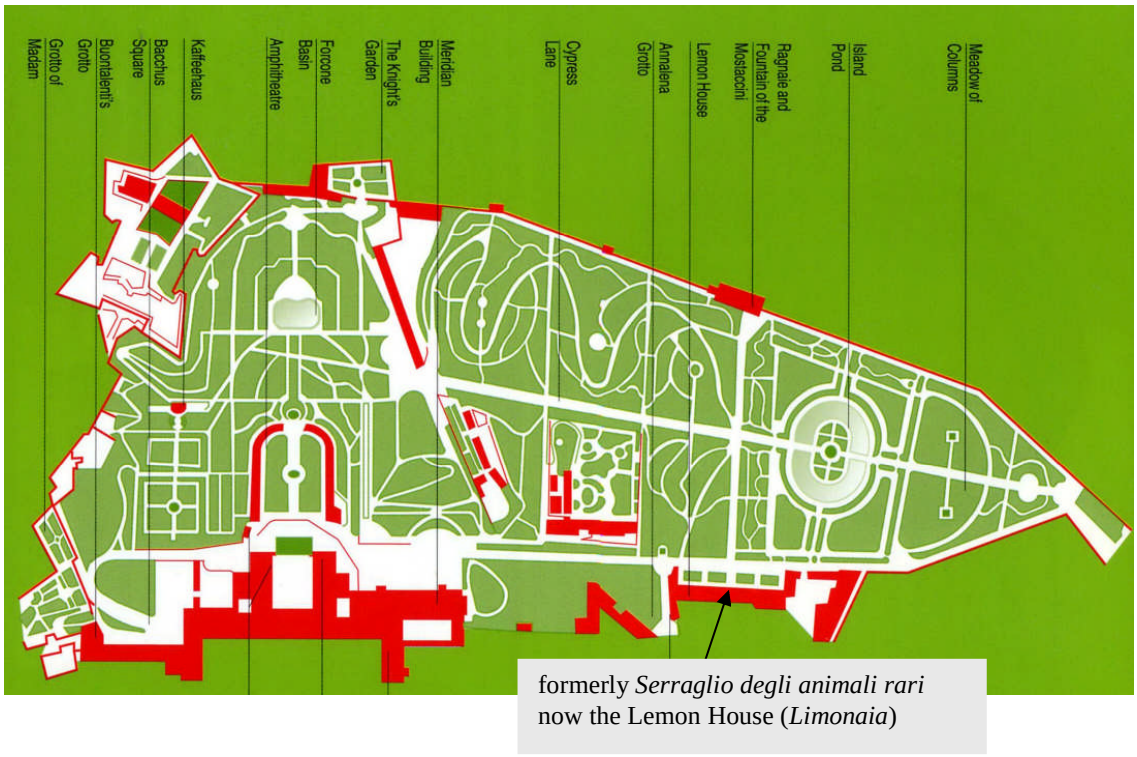

Fig. 44 Plan of the Boboli Gardens. Picture source: Medri, Litta and Giorgio Galletti, 'Boboli Gardens', in *Pitti Palace: all the museums all the works (The Official Guide)*, ed. by Marco Chiarini, Livorno: Sillabe s.r.l., 2001, pp.142-155 (p.142).

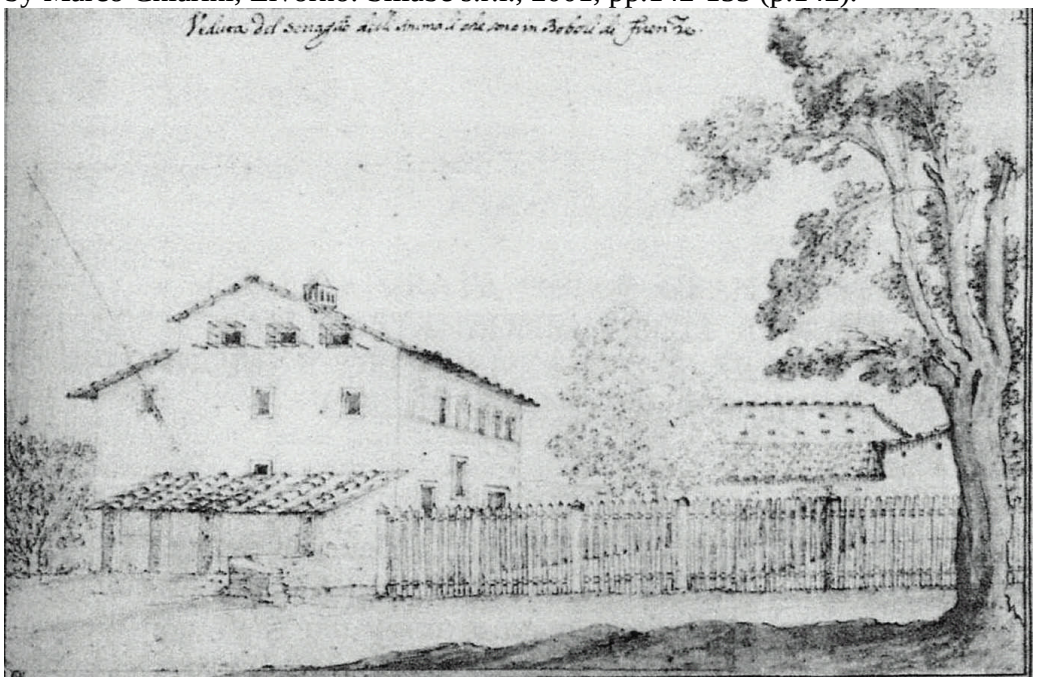

Fig. 45 Giuseppe Santini, *Veduta del Serraglio degli Animali che sono in Boboli di Firenze* (View of the *Serraglio* of animals that are in the Boboli in Florence), after 1677, pen and brown ink, 20.3 x 29.5 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU) 114811NA.

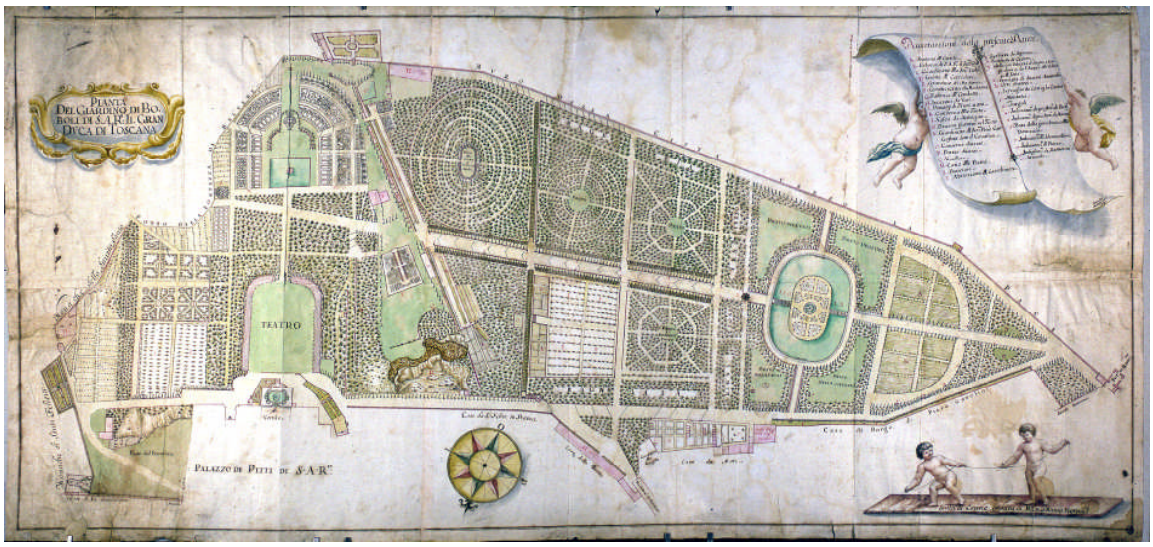

Fig. 46a Michele Gori, Plan of the Boboli Gardens (*Pianta del Gia.rd.ino di Boboli di S.A.R.' il Gran Duca di Toscana*), 1709, Florence: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Nuove acquisizioni, 7,159.

Fig. 46b Detail of Fig. 46a showing the key.

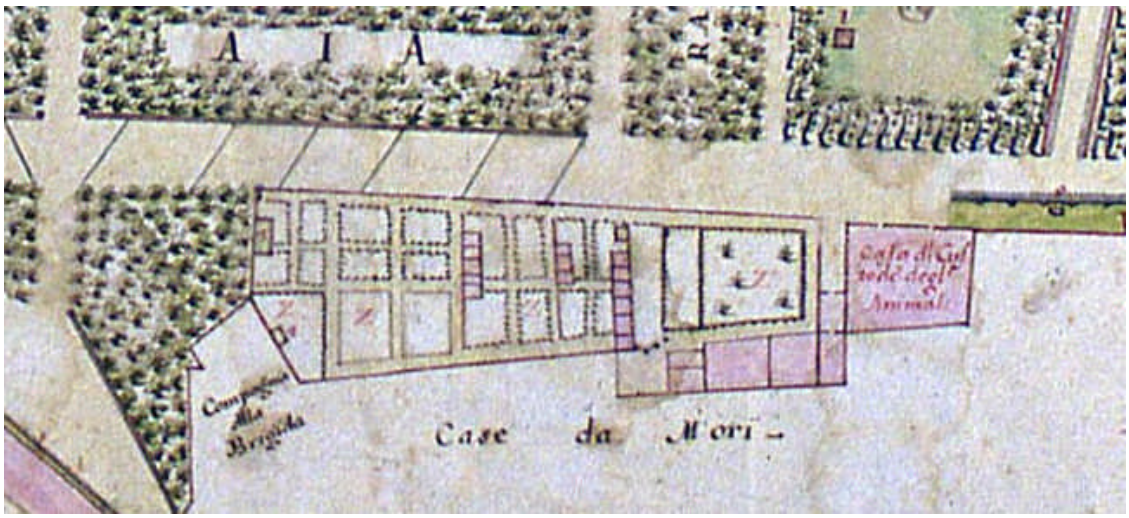

Fig. 46c Detail of Fig. 46a showing the *Serraglio degli animali rari* and the house of the custodian.

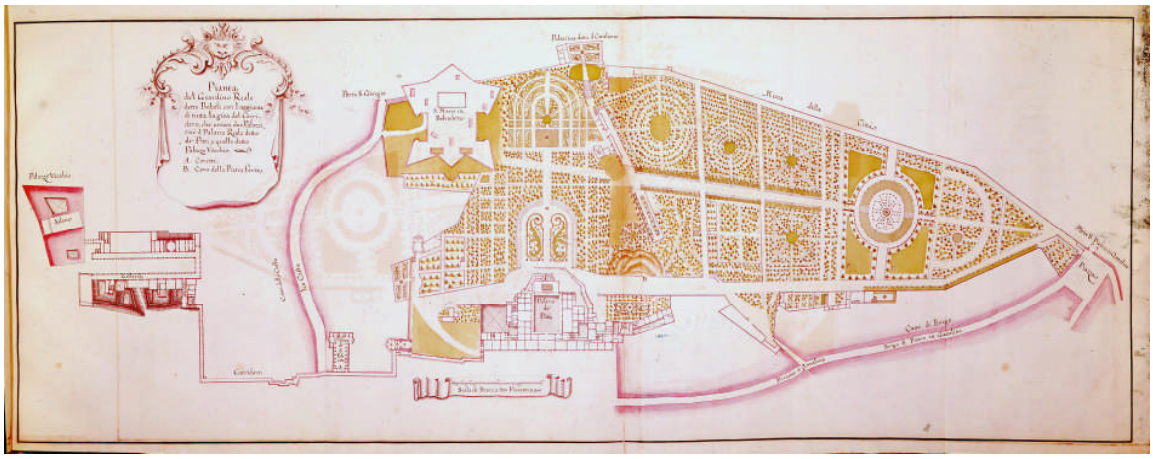

Fig. 47a Giovanni, Ruggeri, Relief of the Boboli Gardens (*Rilievo del giardino di Boboli*), first half of the eighteenth century) Florence: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Palatino, 3. B.1.5., c.6.

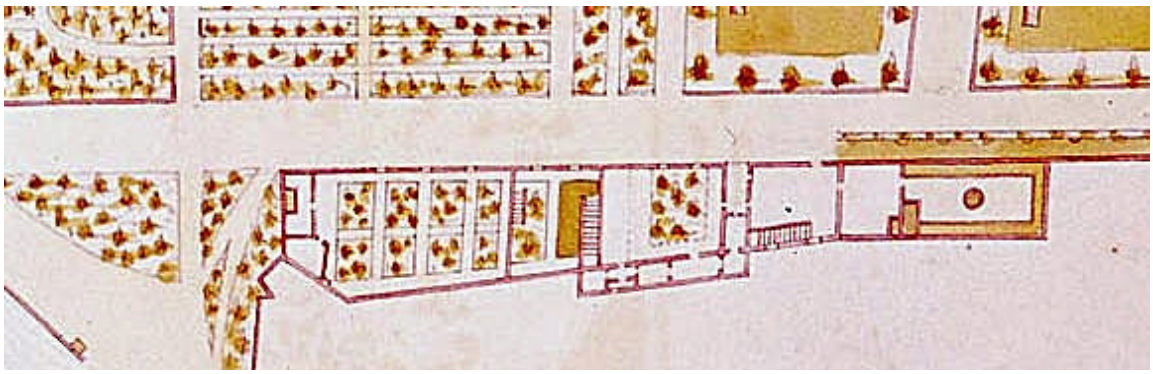

Fig. 47b Detail of Fig. 47a showing the *Serraglio degli animali rari* and the house of the custodian.

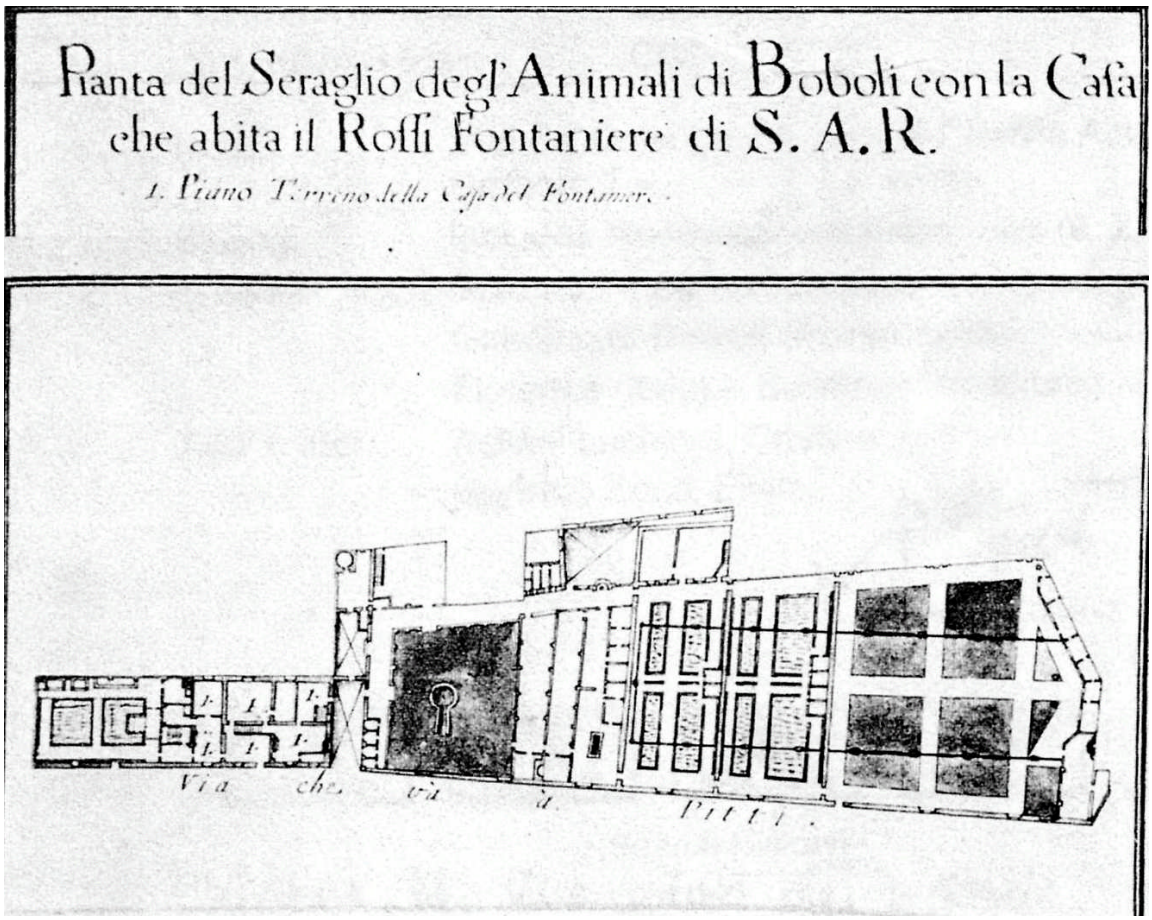

Fig. 48 Plan of the *Serraglio* of rare animals at the Boboli with the House in which lives Rossi Fontaniere of his Serene Royal Highness (*Pianta del Seraglio degl'Animali di Boboli con la Casa che abita il Rossi Fontaniere di S.A.R*), late eighteenth century, Prague State Archive, S.U.A.P., *RAT* 49.

Fig. 49 Soldini, Francesco Maria, *Il reale giardino di Boboli nella sua pianta e nelle sue statue*, Firenze: Fanelli G, 1789, Plate XXXI; Engravings by Gaetano Vascellini, Plate XXXI *Morgante Nano*, 27 x 20 cm, (the engraving represents the marble statue of *Morgante Nano* by the sculptor Valerio di Simone Cioli).

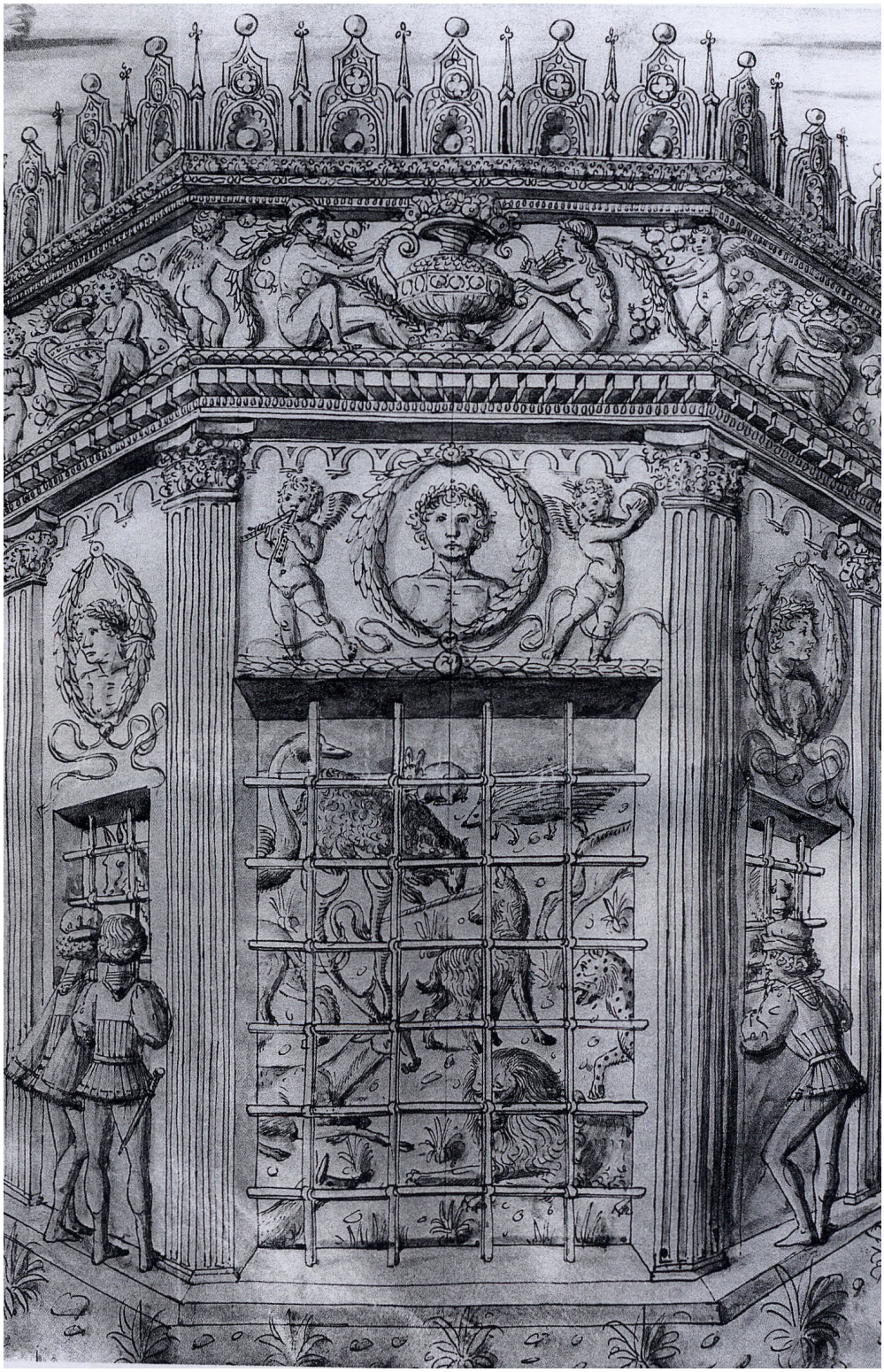

Fig. 50 Drawing of an imaginary *serraglio*, in Johannes de Marcanova, *Collectio Antiquitatum*, 1465, Modena: Biblioteca Estense, Ms.Lat.992=a.L.5.15, f.38v.

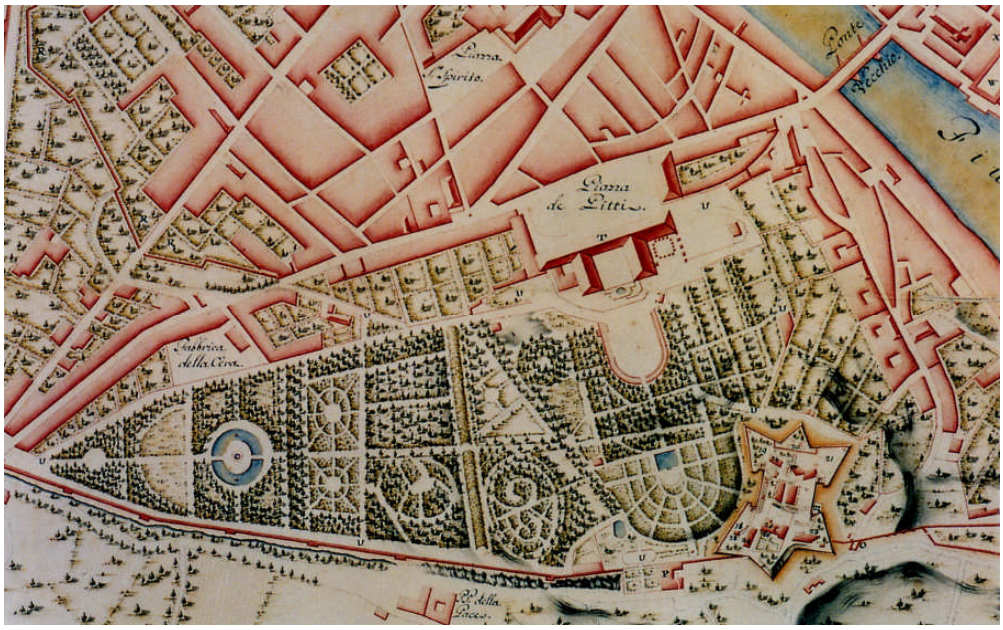

Fig. 51 Giuliano Anastasi (?), *Plan of the City of Florence* (detail showing the Boboli Gardens), ca. 1767, Florence: Archivio di Stato, Segretaria di Gabinetto, Pezzo 625, 'Pianta della città di Firenze'.

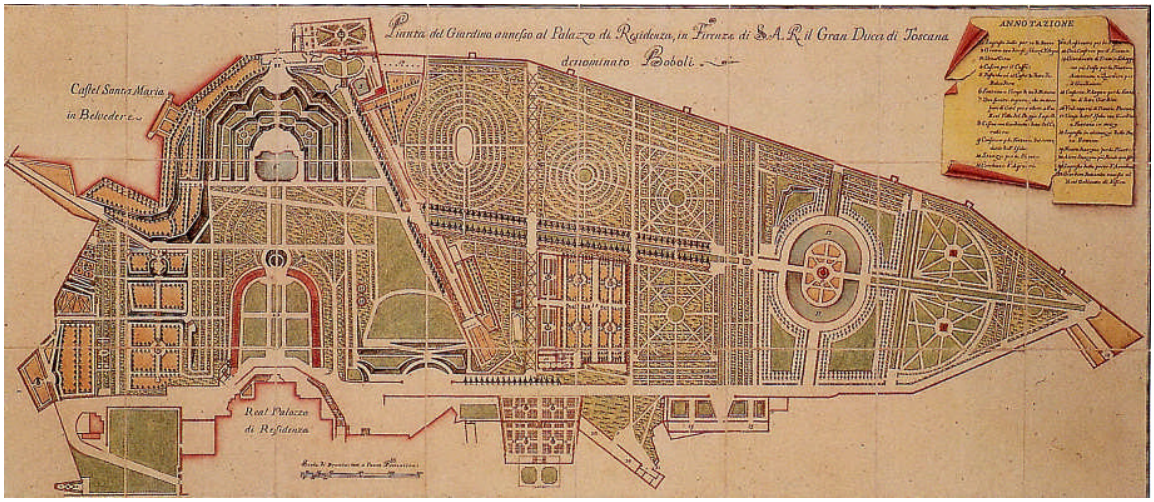

Fig. 52 Anonymous Florentine, Plan of the Garden annexed to the Residence in Florence of His Royal Highness (*Pianta del Giardino annesso al Palazzo di Residenza in Firenze di S.A.R.*), ca.1788, Florence: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, SUAP, RAT, 306.

Fig. 53 Aniello Lamberti, View of the Lemon House, the *Limonaia* at the Boboli Gardens (*Veduta del Nuovo Stanzone dei Vasi nel Reale Giardino di Boboli*), 1784-90, engraving and coloured with tempera, 32.7 x 49.5 cm, Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze (BNCF), Nuovi Acquisti (N.A.), cartella 6, nn. 111-122.

Fig. 54 Zanobi del Rosso, the *Limonaia* at the Boboli Gardens, Florence, 1777-78. (Photo: author, October 2008).

ILLUSTRATIONS - CHAPTER 2
The Medici's animal collections: processes of procurement and practices of exchange

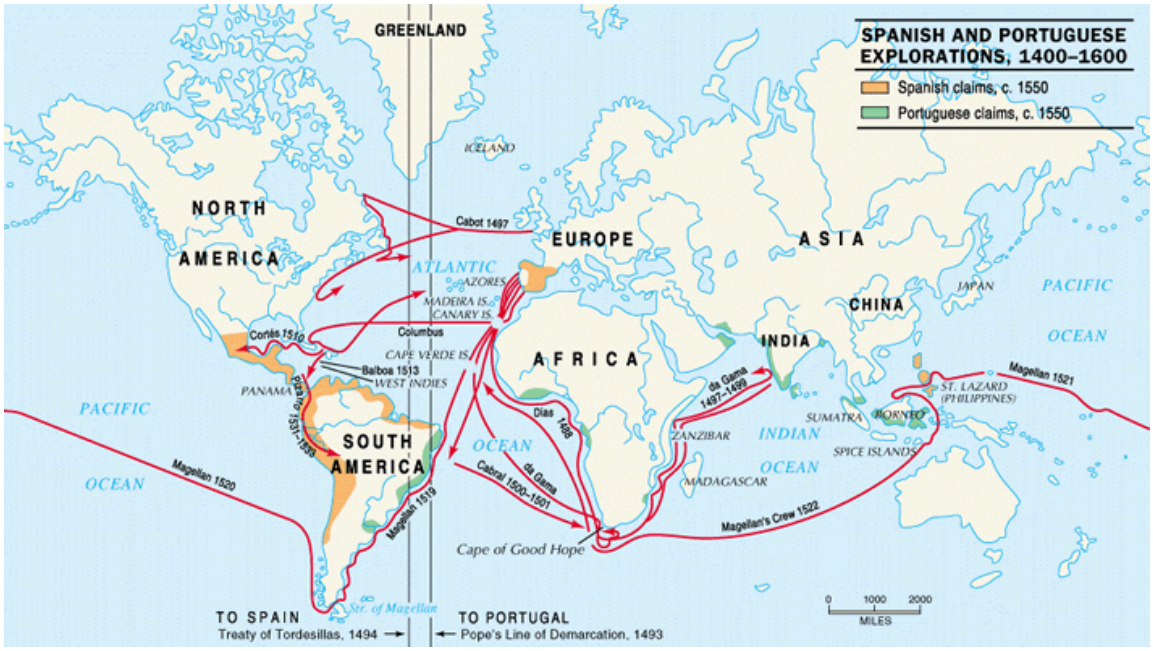

Fig. 55 Map showing Spanish and Portuguese Explorations 1400-1600 and the demarcation of territories ratified by the 'Treaty of Tordesillas' (1494), stipulating that the lands east of the Cape Verde '(longitude of 46° 30W)' were to be reserved for the Portuguese, and those to the west for Spain.

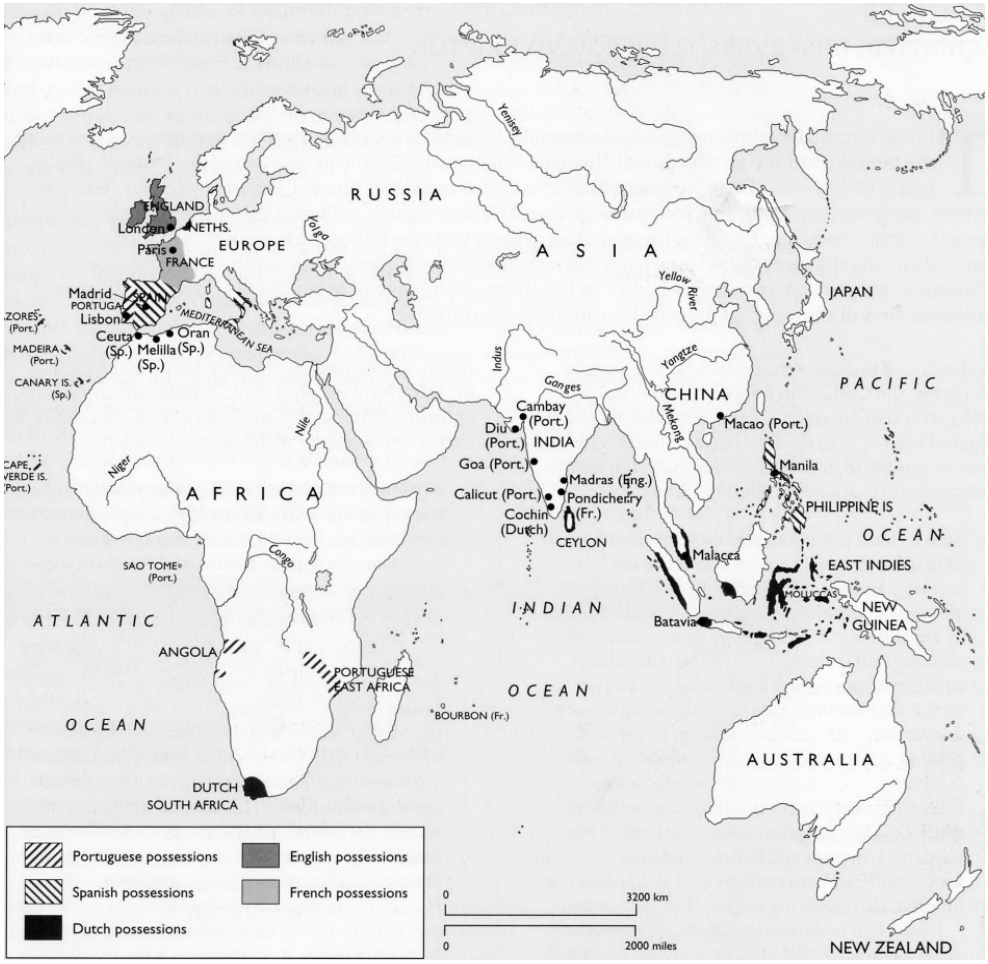

Fig. 56 European Penetration of Africa and Asia, 1700. The map indicates the Dutch possessions in the East Indies.

Fig. 57 The shipyard of the Dutch East India Company in Amsterdam (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or VOC), circa 1750.

ILLUSTRATIONS - CHAPTER 3

Fig. 58 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi*, 1459-62, fresco, tempera and oil, west wall, Florence: Chapel, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi.

Fig. 59 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 58 showing various birds, west wall of the apse).

Fig. 60 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 3a of the hunting scene on the east wall), 1459-62, fresco, tempera and oil, Florence: Chapel, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 61 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of the hunting scenes), 1459-62, fresco, tempera and oil, west wall, Florence: Chapel, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi.

Fig. 62 Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (Strozzi Altarpiece formerly at the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Trinità, Florence) (detail), 1423, tempera on wood, 303 x 282 cm (incl. frame), Florence: Uffizi Gallery.

Fig. 63 Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 62 showing two monkeys and the head of a camel).

Fig. 64 Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 62 from the central lunette showing a cheetah and a leopard and a leopard killing a deer).

Fig. 65 Gentile da Fabriano, *Adoration of the Magi* (detail from Fig. 62, the central panel, showing the heads of a lion and a cheetah).

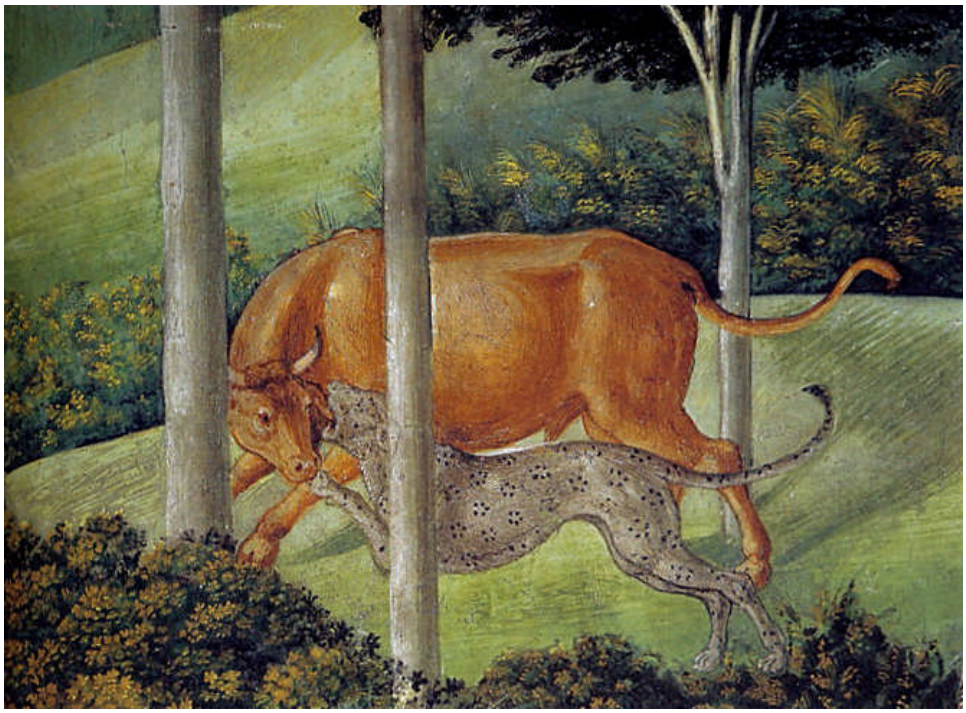

Fig. 66 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 58 showing a leopard attacking a bull, west wall).

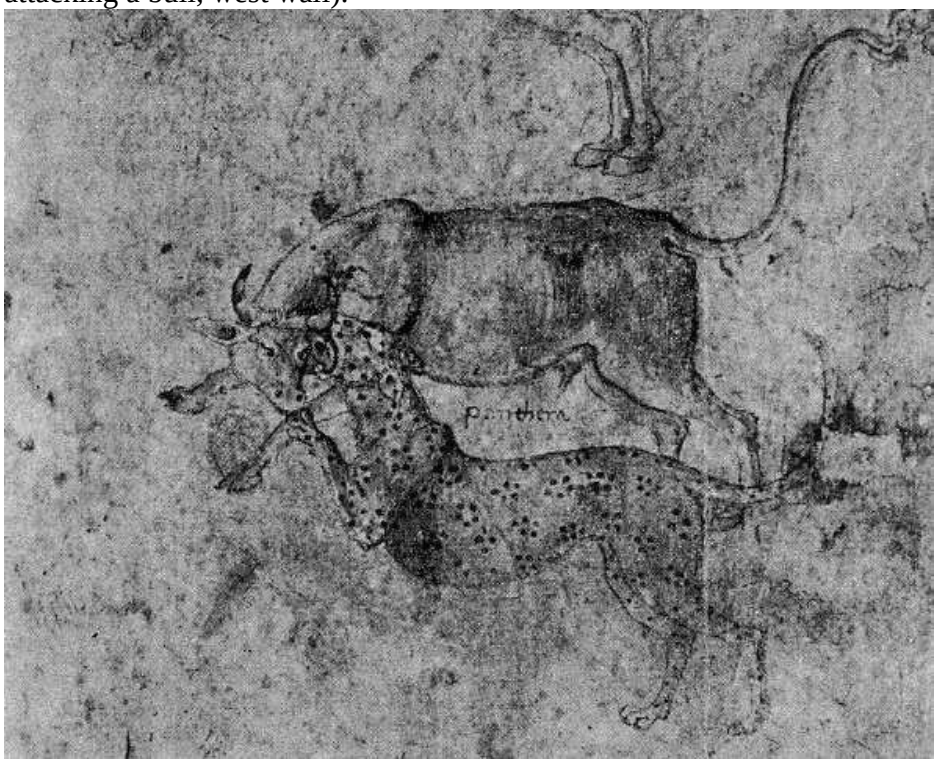

Fig. 67 School of Pisanello, *Leopard attacking a Bull*, second quarter of fifteenth century, pen and brush in bistre on card, 23.5 x 17.2 cm, Dijon: Musée des Beaux-Arts, Inv. 1745.

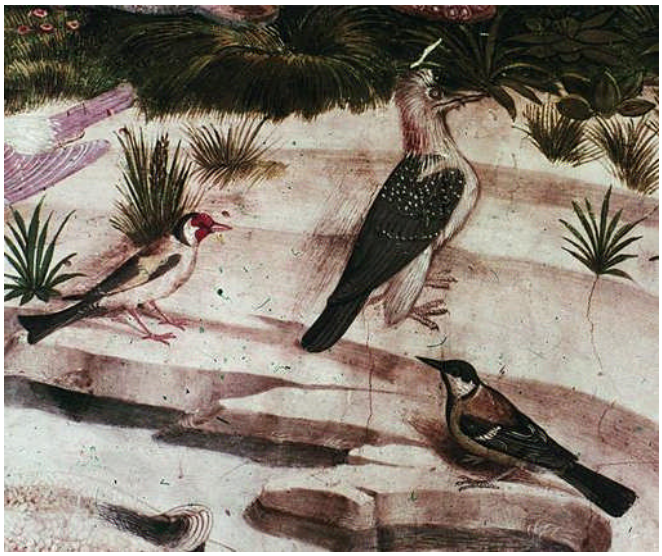

Fig. 68 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 58 showing various birds on the west wall).

Fig. 69 Giovannino de'Grassi, *Taccuino* (lammergeyer, goldfinch and ringneck parakeet), ca.1380-1400, silverpoint heightened with white, pen and wash with watercolour, 26 x 17.5 cm, Bergamo: Biblioteca Civica A. Mai, Cassaf. 1.21,13v.

Fig. 70 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 58 showing a cheetah chasing a deer on the west wall).

Fig. 71 Benozzo Gozzoli, *Journey of the Magi* (detail of Fig. 58 showing a cheetah seated behind the rider and a somewhat stylized leopard with his retainers on the west wall).

Fig. 72 Giovannino de'Grassi, *Taccuino* (left: cheetah (top) and Leopard (below), right: deer, hare, fox and cheetah), ca.1380-1400, silverpoint heightened with white, pen and wash with watercolour, 26 x 17.5 cm, Bergamo: Biblioteca Civica A. Mai, Cassaf. 1.21, 15v. and 16r.

Fig. 73 Anonymous (formerly attributed to Paolo Uccello/1396/97-1475, Animal studies, second or third quarter of the fifteenth century, pen and brown ink on reddish paper, 23.6 x 17.8 cm, Vienna: Albertina: Inv. no. 27v.

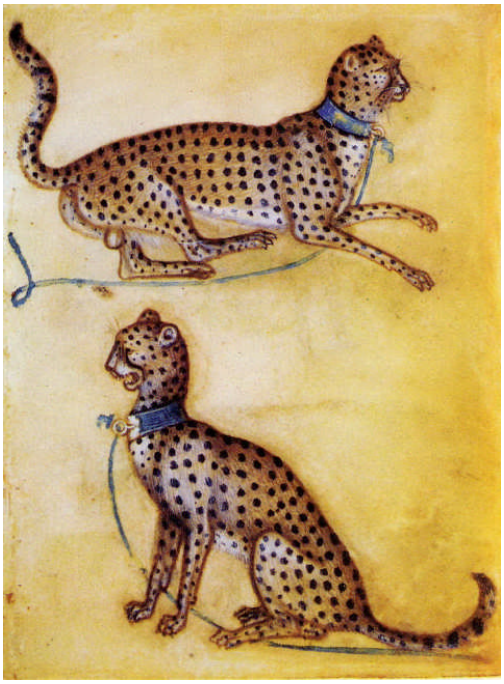

Fig. 74 Follower of Giovannino de' Grassi ca. 1400-10, watercolour and bodycolour on vellum, 16.4 x 12.3 cm, London: British Museum, Inv.1895, 1214.94r.

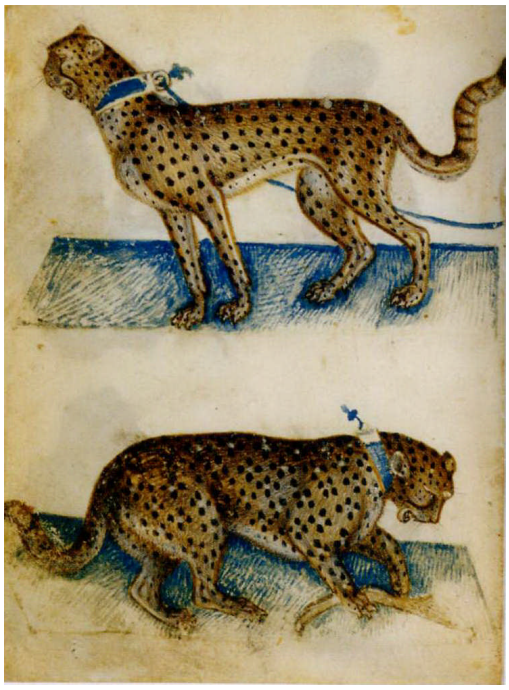

Fig. 75 Follower of Giovannino de' Grassi ca.1400-10, watercolour and bodycolour on vellum, 16.5 x 12.2 cm, Weimar: Klassik Stiftung.

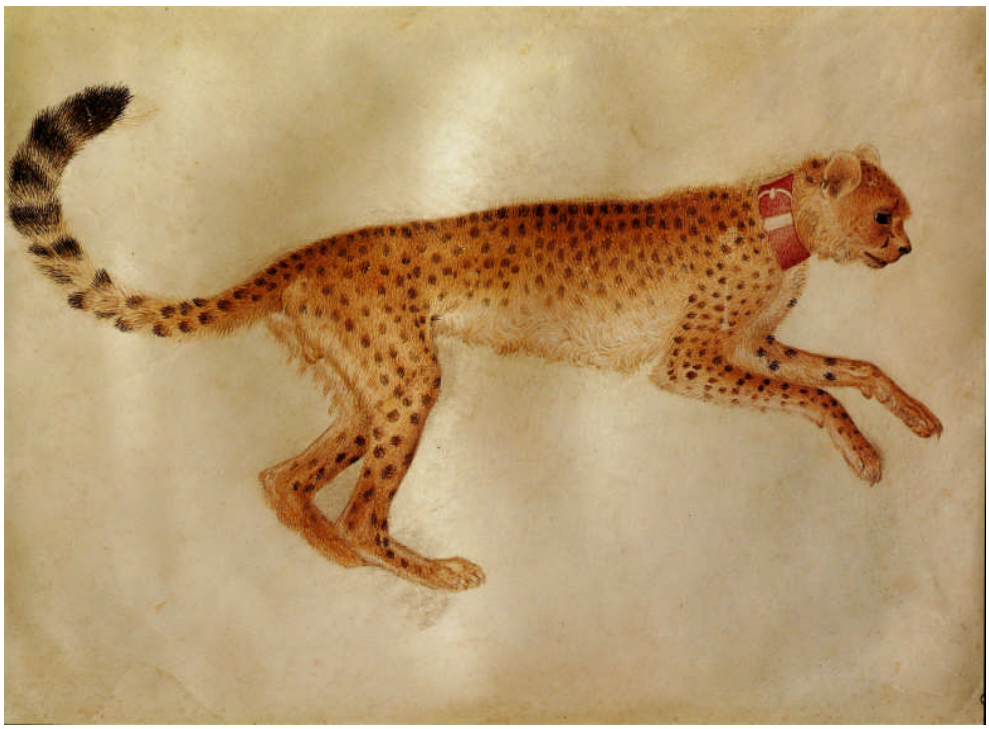

Fig. 76 Antonio Pisanello, Study of a cheetah with a red collar, watercolour on parchment, 15.9 x 23.1 cm, Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. 2426.

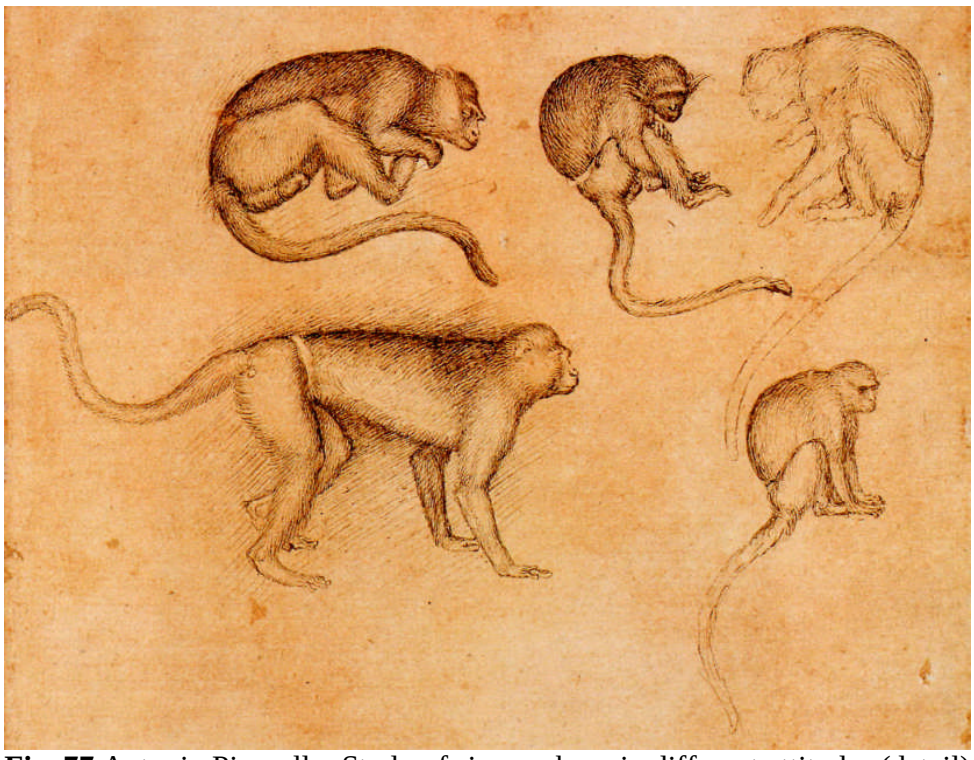

Fig. 77 Antonio Pisanello, Study of six monkeys in different attitudes (detail), pen and brown ink on coloured paper, 24.5 x 17.9 cm, Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv.2391r.

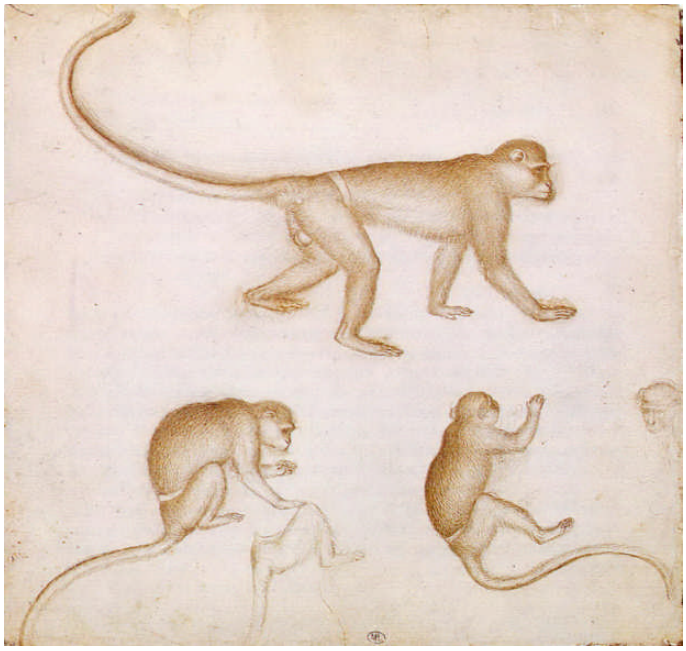

Fig. 78 Antonio Pisanello, Study of three monkeys in different attitudes, silverpoint, on prepared paper, 20.6 x 21.7 cm, Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv.2394r.

Fig. 79a Domenico Ghirlandaio, *The Adoration of the Magi*, ca.1485-90, fresco, Florence: Santa Maria Novella, Tornabuoni Chapel.

Fig. 79b Detail of Fig.79a showing the giraffe.

Fig. 80a Raffaello Botticini, *The Adoration of the Magi*, ca.1495, tempera on poplar panel, diameter 104 cm, Chicago: Art Institute, Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson Collection, Inv. 1937.997.

Fig. 80b Detail of Fig. 80a showing the giraffe.

Fig. 81a Andrea del Sarto, *The Journey of the Magi*, 1511, fresco, 407 x 321 cm, Florence: Santissima Annunziata, Chiostrino de' voti. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 81b Detail of Fig. 81a showing the giraffe.

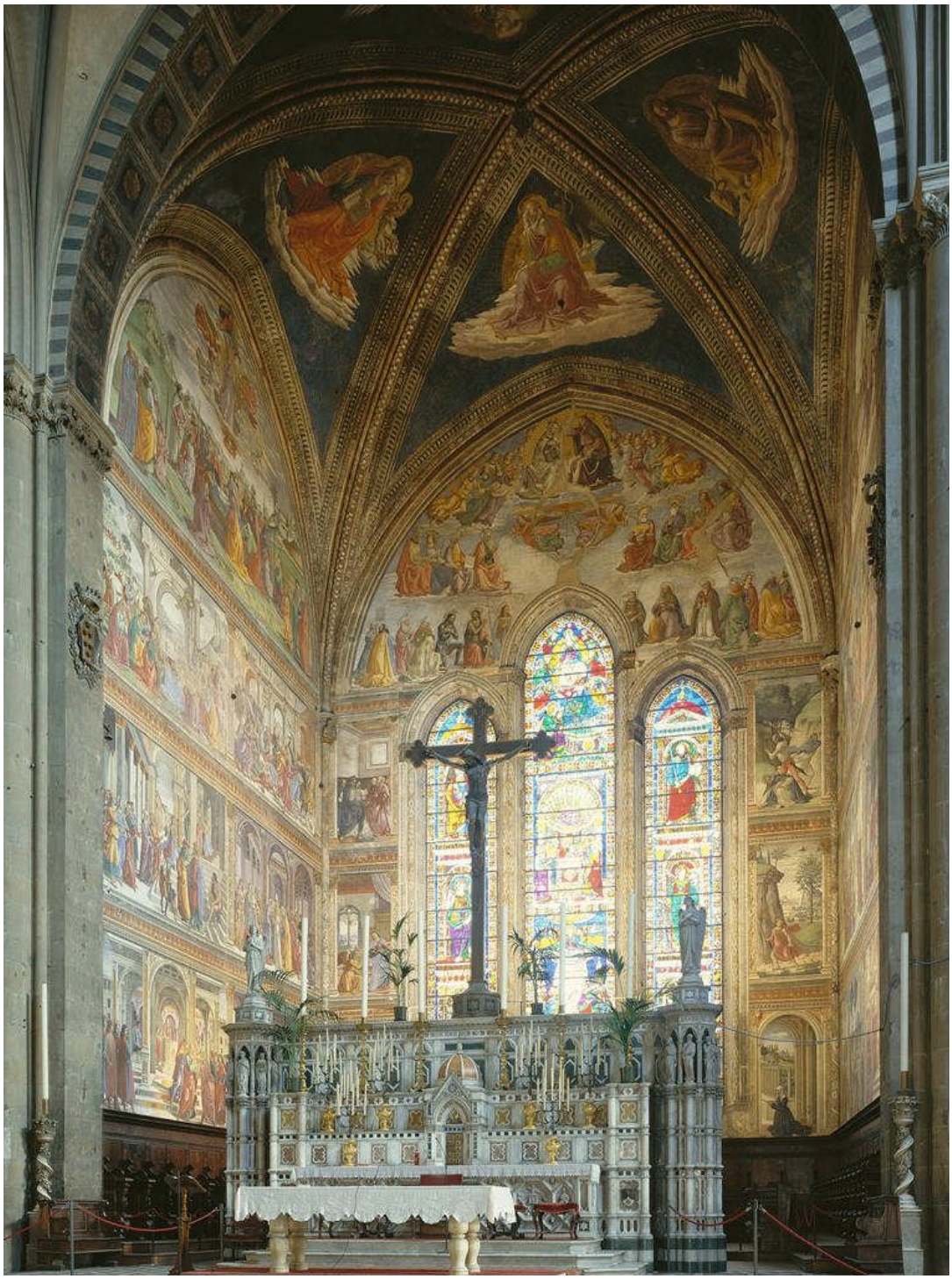

Fig. 82 Tornabuoni Chapel with Ghirlandaio's fresco of the *Adoration of the Magi* (the scene on the far left of the third register on the wall left of the altar). Florence: Santa Maria Novella, Sanctuary. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 83 Anonymous Florentine Engraver, *A Giraffe and its Keeper* (the inscription 'Alta Palmi XXIIII', 24 palms, refers to the animal's height), 1490s, hand-coloured engraving, 25.8 x 18.3 cm, the print was pasted next to an account of the Egyptian embassy that brought the giraffe to Florence in 1487, in Sigismondo Tizio's *Historiae Senenses*, Vol. VI, from 1476-1505, Vatican City: Vatican Library, Ms. Chigi, G.11.36. 148v.

Fig. 84 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 4 showing only the section painted by del Sarto during the first phase of the creation of the fresco), 1519-21, fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande*. Photo: Scala, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 85 Andrea del Sarto (attrib.), *Modello for Tribute to Caesar*, ca.1519, brown and grey wash on paper, with white highlights and preparatory tracing in black chalk, 43 x 33.5 cm, Paris: Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, Fonds des dessins et miniatures, Inv.1673r.

Fig. 86 Anonymous, study of a giraffe, a chameleon, a civet ? and the head of a dog or civet ?, between 1487-1519, brown wash on tinted paper, 20.7 x 14 cm, *Giornale de Animali* (18752F-18937 F), Florence: Uffizi, Gabinettto Disegni e Stampe, No.18930F. Photo: author, October 2008.

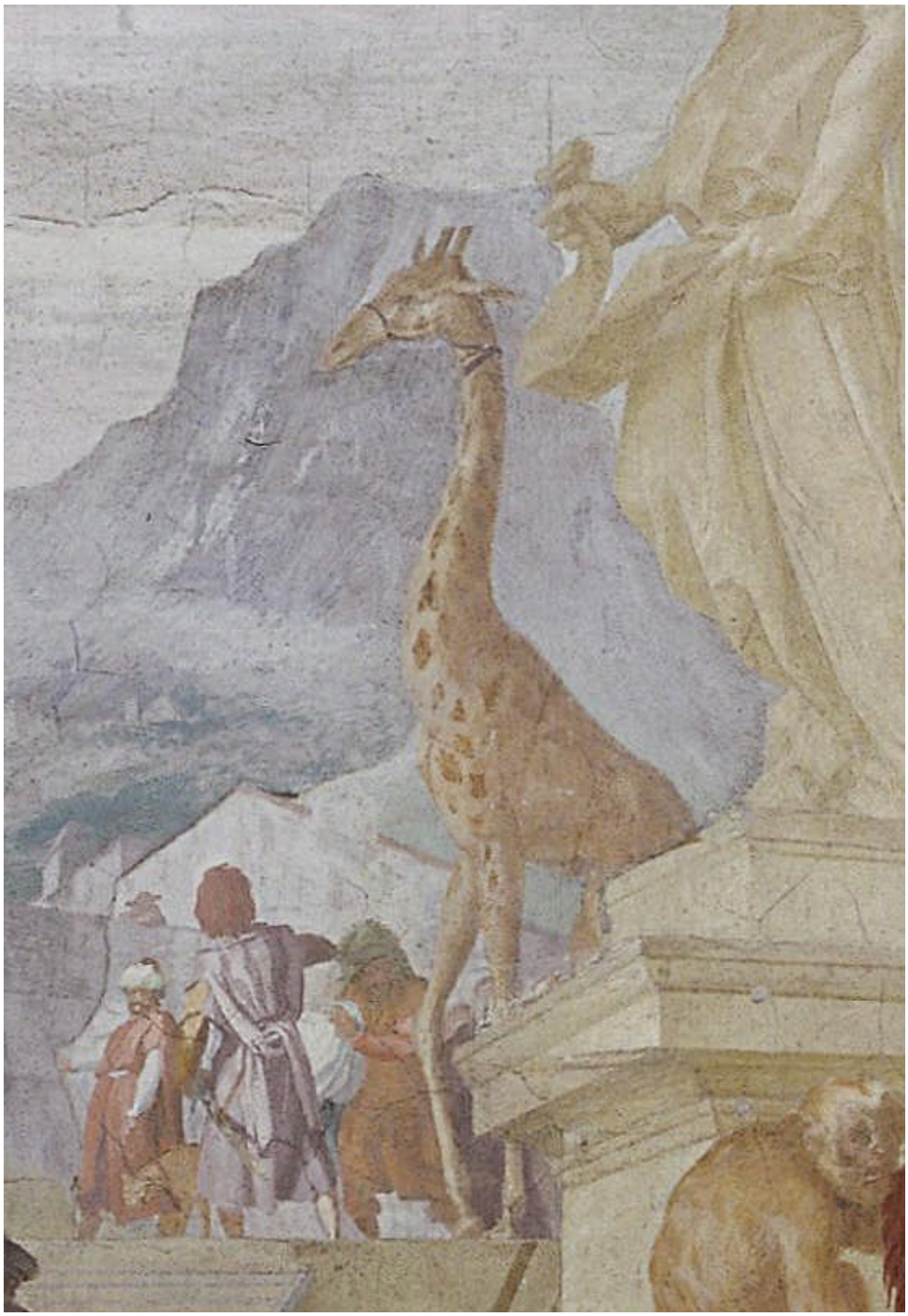

Fig. 87 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 4 showing the giraffe), 1519-21, fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande*. Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 88 Detail of Fig. 86 showing the chameleon, GDSU, *Giornale de Animali*, No.18930F.

Fig. 89 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing the chameleon).

Fig. 90 Detail of Fig. 86 showing the civet ? and the head of a dog or civet ?, GDSU, *Giornale de Animali*, No.18930F.

Fig. 91 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing the civet.

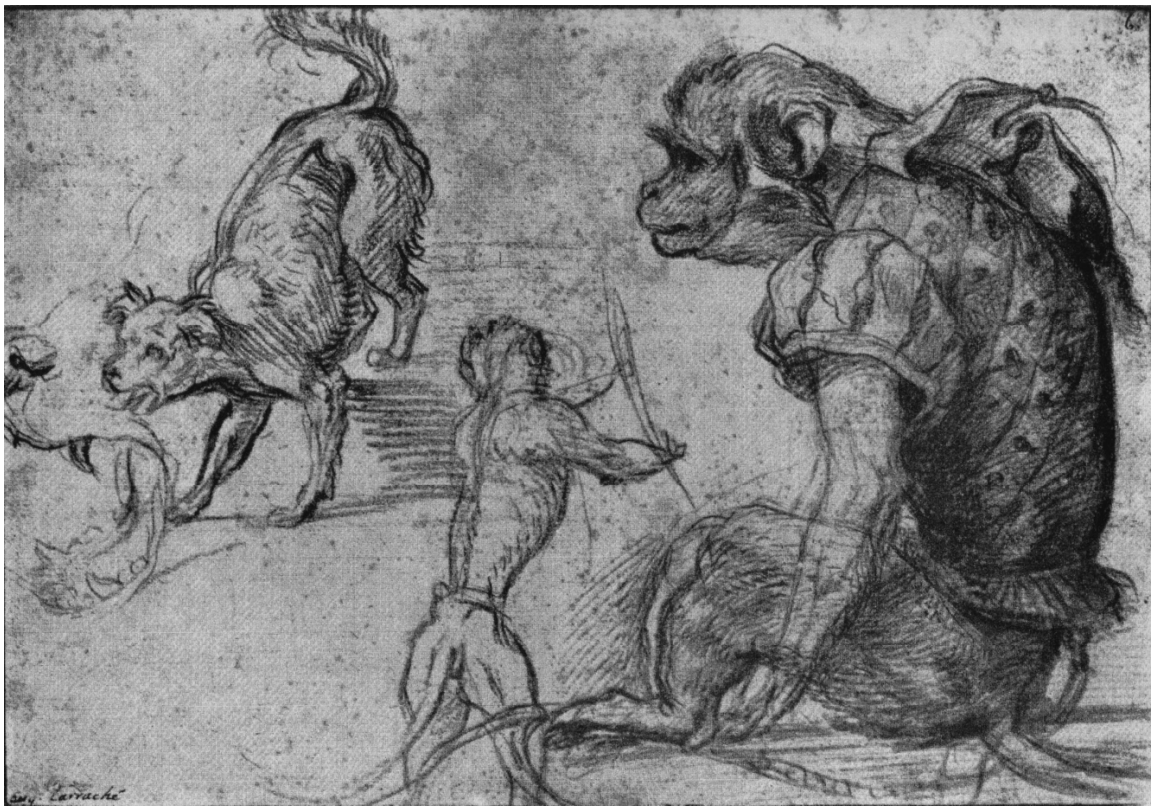

Fig. 92 Andrea del Sarto, *Study of two monkeys and a dog*, ca.1519, red pencil, 18 x 26.2 cm, Darmstadt: Hessisches Landesmuseum, Cat.AE 1373.

Fig. 93 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing a costumed monkey).

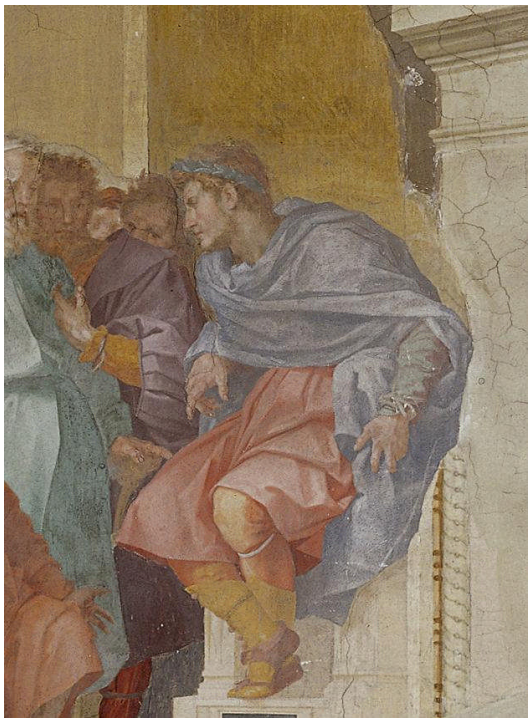

Fig. 94 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing the figure of Julius Caesar).

Fig. 95 Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* (detail of Fig. 5 showing Lorenzo de' Medici), 1556-68, fresco, Florence: *Sala di Lorenzo il Magnifico*, Palazzo Vecchio (formerly known as Palazzo della Signoria). Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 96 Andrea del Sarto, *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar* (detail of Fig. 84 showing the giraffe, the monkey and the parrot).

Fig. 97 Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* (detail of Fig. 5 showing the giraffe).

Fig. 98 Giorgio Vasari, *Lorenzo de' Medici Receiving Gifts from his Ambassadors* (detail of Fig. 5 showing the monkey and the parrot).

Fig. 99 *Tribute of Animals presented to Julius Caesar*, additions made by Allori between 1578-82 (detail of Fig. 4 showing the turkey with *putto* and the horses and grooms), fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande*. Photo: Scala, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 100 Agnolo Bronzino (drawing and cartoon), Jan Rost (textile), *Portiera of Abundance*, 1545, tapestry in wool, silk, gold and gilded silver, 8-10 warps per cm, 242 x 146 cm, Florence, Palazzo Pitti, Depositi Arazzi.

Fig. 101 Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax*, 1478-82 , fresco, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, *Salone Grande* (northeast wall), Photo: SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig.102 Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax* (detail of Fig.101 showing an elephant being led past an edifice that looks reminiscent of the Castel Sant Angelo, Rome).

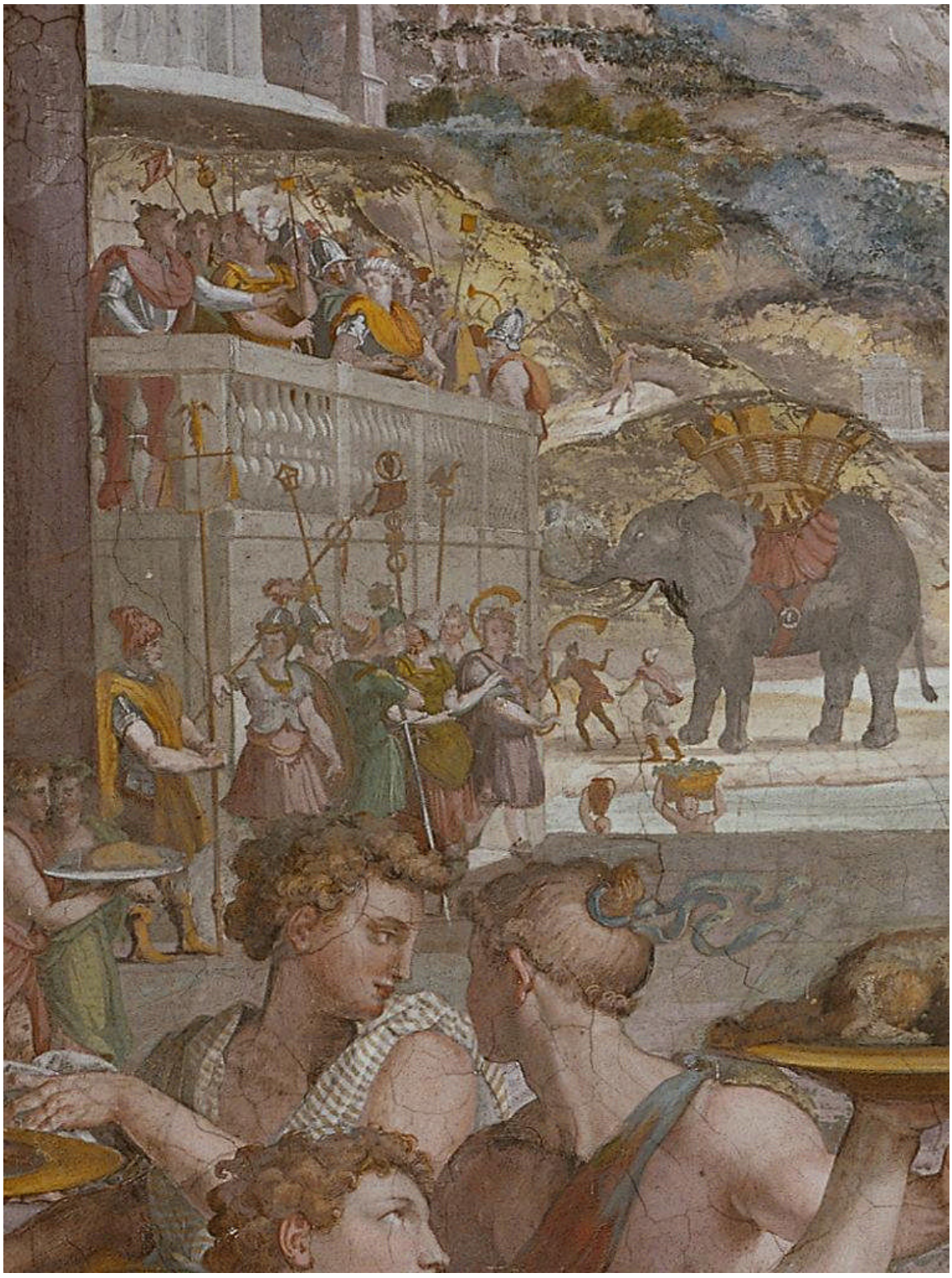

Fig.103 Alessandro Allori, *Scipio Africanus Meeting Hasdrubal at the Court of Syphax* (detail of Fig.101 showing an elephant being presented to a papal figure an assembled audience).

ILLUSTRATIONS - CHAPTER 4

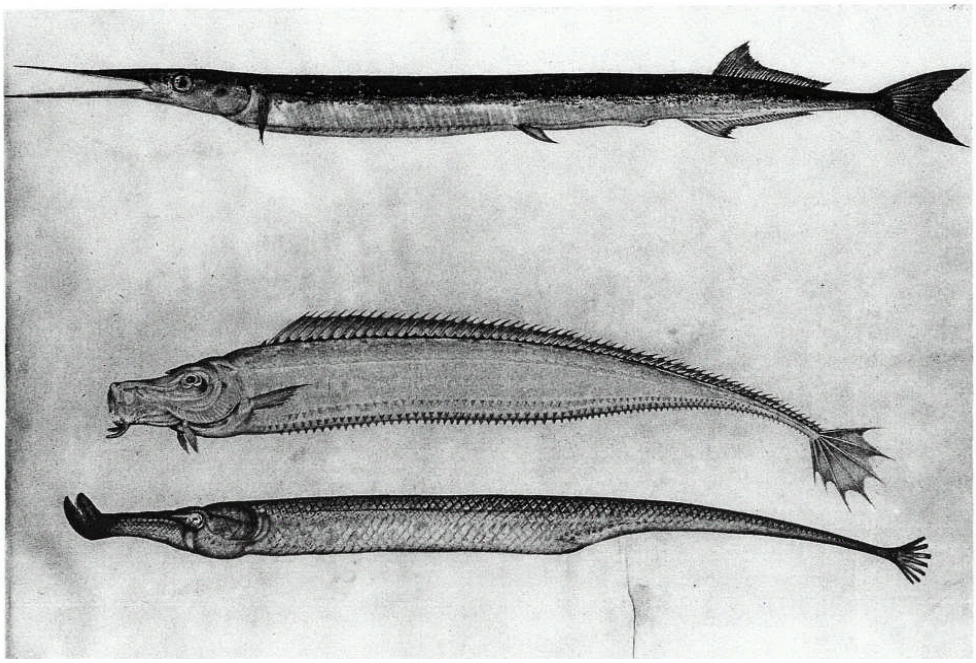

Fig. 104a Jacopo Ligozzi, illustration of three fish from the *Meervischbuch* (Manuscript Book of seawater fish), Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften und Inkunabelsammlung, Cod. min. 83, ser. no. 2693, fol.18r.

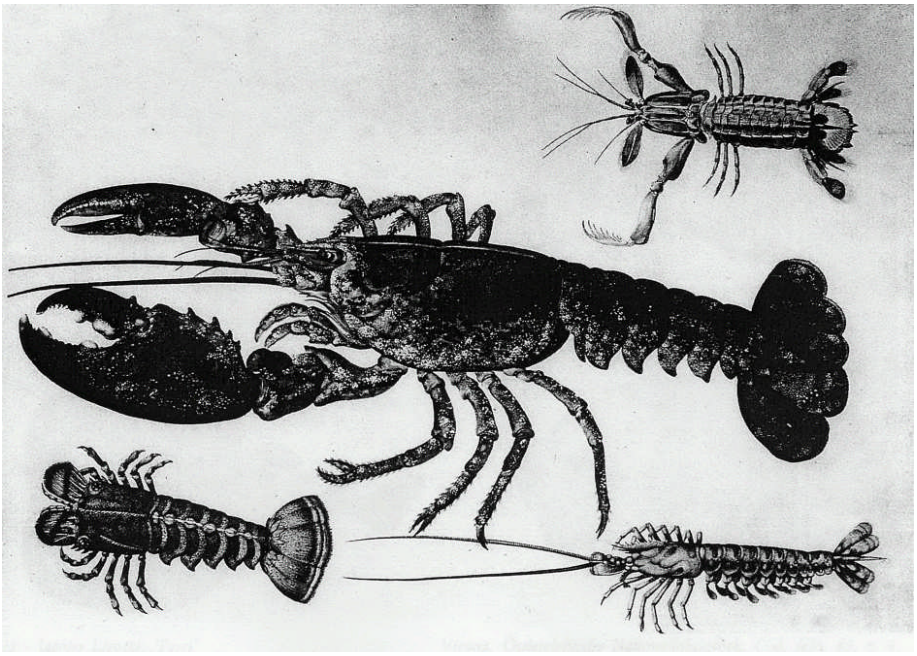

Fig. 104b Jacopo Ligozzi, illustration of a lobster and other crustaceans from the *Meervischbuch* (see Fig. 104a for details), fol. 2r.

Fig. 105a Giorgio Liberale (attrib.), *Sea Animals* (unsigned and undated), watercolour on parchment, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. ser. no. 2669, fol. 47r.

Fig.105b Giorgio Liberale (attrib.), *Sea Animals* (see Fig. 105a for details), fol.91r.

Fig. 106 Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Study of a Helmeted Curassow, 1550-85, watercolour on paper, or parchment, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. min. 42, fol.46r.

Fig. 107 Jacopo Ligozzi, *Helmeted Curassow* (*Pauxi pauxi*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 67.5 x 46 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1990Orn.). Photo: author, October 2008.

Fig. 108 Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Gallina dell' Indie* (Helmeted Curassow copied from Jacopo Ligozzi's original), watercolour on paper, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.155.

Fig. 109 Jacopo Ligozzi, South American Blue and gold Macaw (*Ara ararauna*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 67 x 45.6 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1997Orn.).

Fig. 110a Jacopo Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa* (*Allactaga elater*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 26 x 34.1 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1959Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 110b Detail of Fig. 110a.

Fig. 110c Detail of Fig. 110a.

Fig. 111 Jacopo Ligozzi, top - *Horned Viper* (*Cerastes cerastes*) bottom - Sahara sand viper or Avicenna viper (*Cerastes vipera*), 1577, chalk and coloured tempera on paper, 43.4 x 37.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), *'corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1973 Orn).

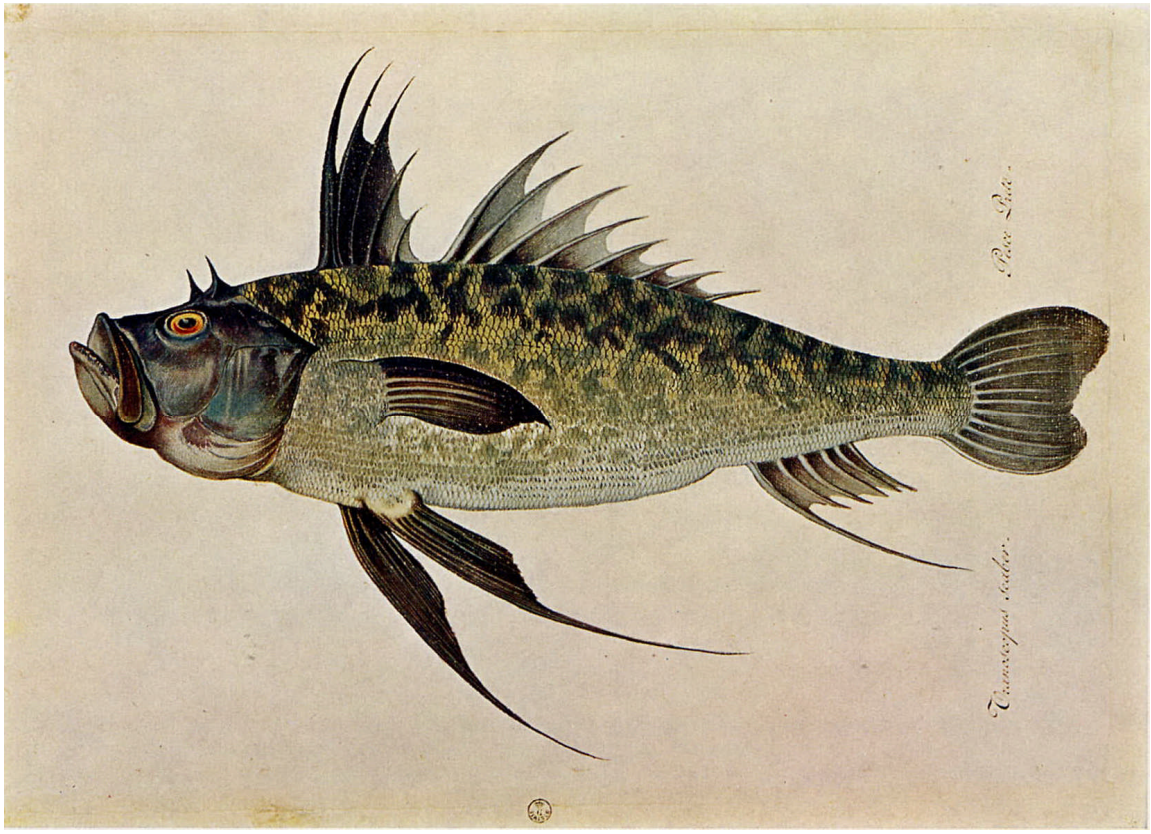

Fig. 112 Jacopo Ligozzi, *Priest-fish* (*Uranoscopus scaber*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, heightened with gold, 41 x 28.5 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano*', 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (2020 Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

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Fig. 113 Jacopo Ligozzi, *White Partridge* (*Lagopus mutus*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 42 x 33.8 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1991Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

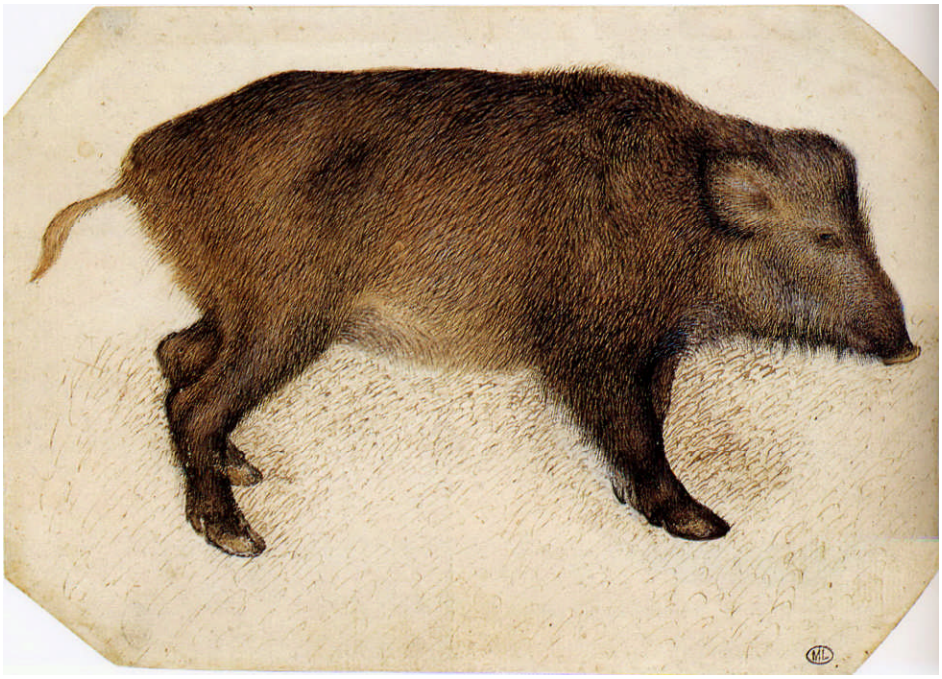


Fig. 114 Antonio Pisanello, Wild boar, ca.1435-45, watercolour and white heightening over black chalk or metalpoint, 14 x 20 cm, Paris: Paris: Musée du Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. 2417.

Fig. 115 Jacopo Ligozzi, *Collared Peccary* (*Dicotyles torquatus*), ca.1576/7-87, pen and gouache on paper, 45 x 66.5 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1961Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 116 Jacopo Ligozzi, Agouti (*Agouti paca*), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 54.2 x 42.1 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1957Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Fig. 117a Detail of Fig.113.

Fig. 117b Detail of Fig.113.

Fig. 117c Detail of Fig.113.

Fig. 117d Detail of Fig.113.

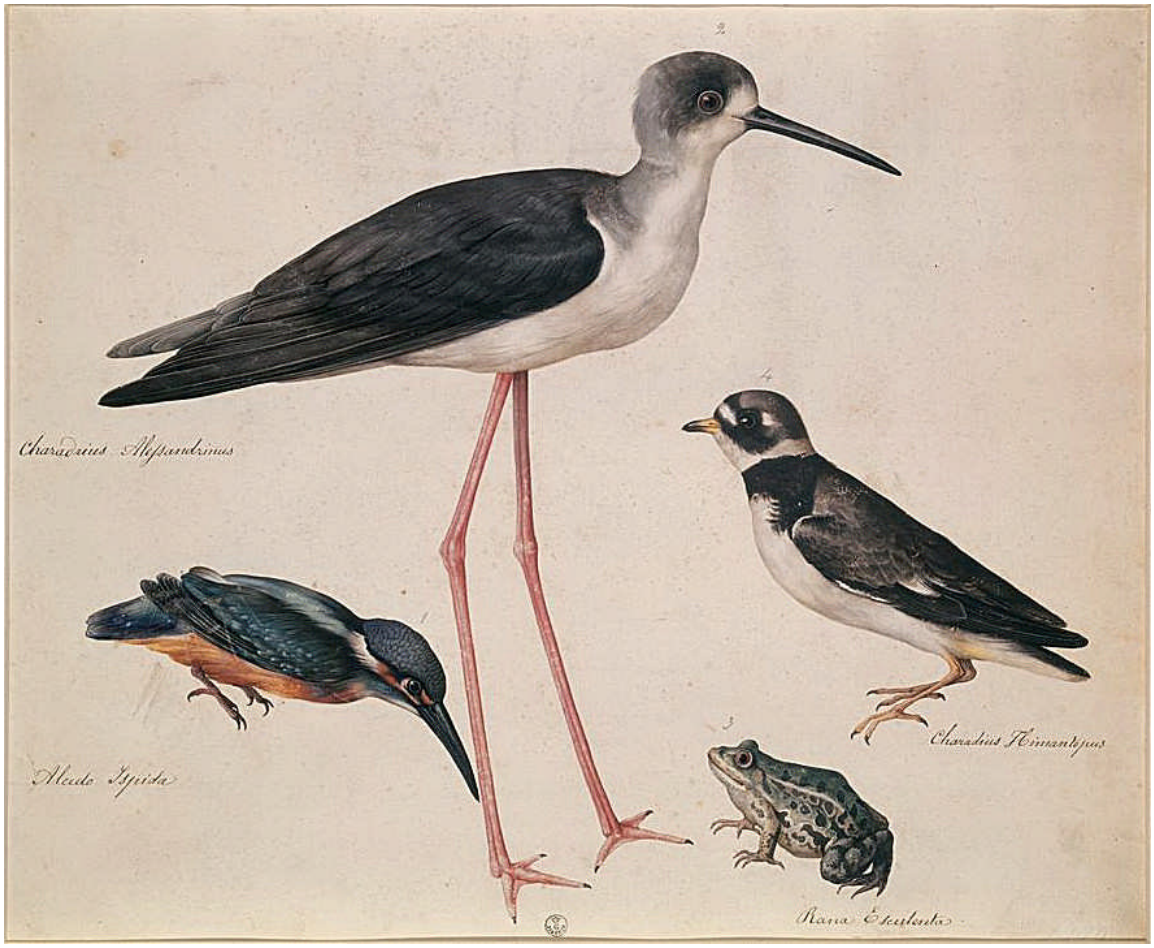


Fig. 118 Jacopo Ligozzi, from left to right - Kingfisher (*Alcedo ispida*), Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) and a European common frog (*Rana temporaria*), between 1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 37.2 x 45 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1979 Orn.). Photo: Nannoni.

Fig. 119 Anonymous maker, Blue and gold Macaw (*Ara ararauna*), watercolour on paper, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.4.

Fig. 120a Jacopo Ligozzi, *Hazel Grouse* (*Tetrastes bonasia*), between 1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 40.3 x 32.8 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano*', 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn. (1992 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 120b Detail of Fig.120a.

Fig. 120c Detail of Fig.120a.

Fig. 120d Detail of Fig.120a.

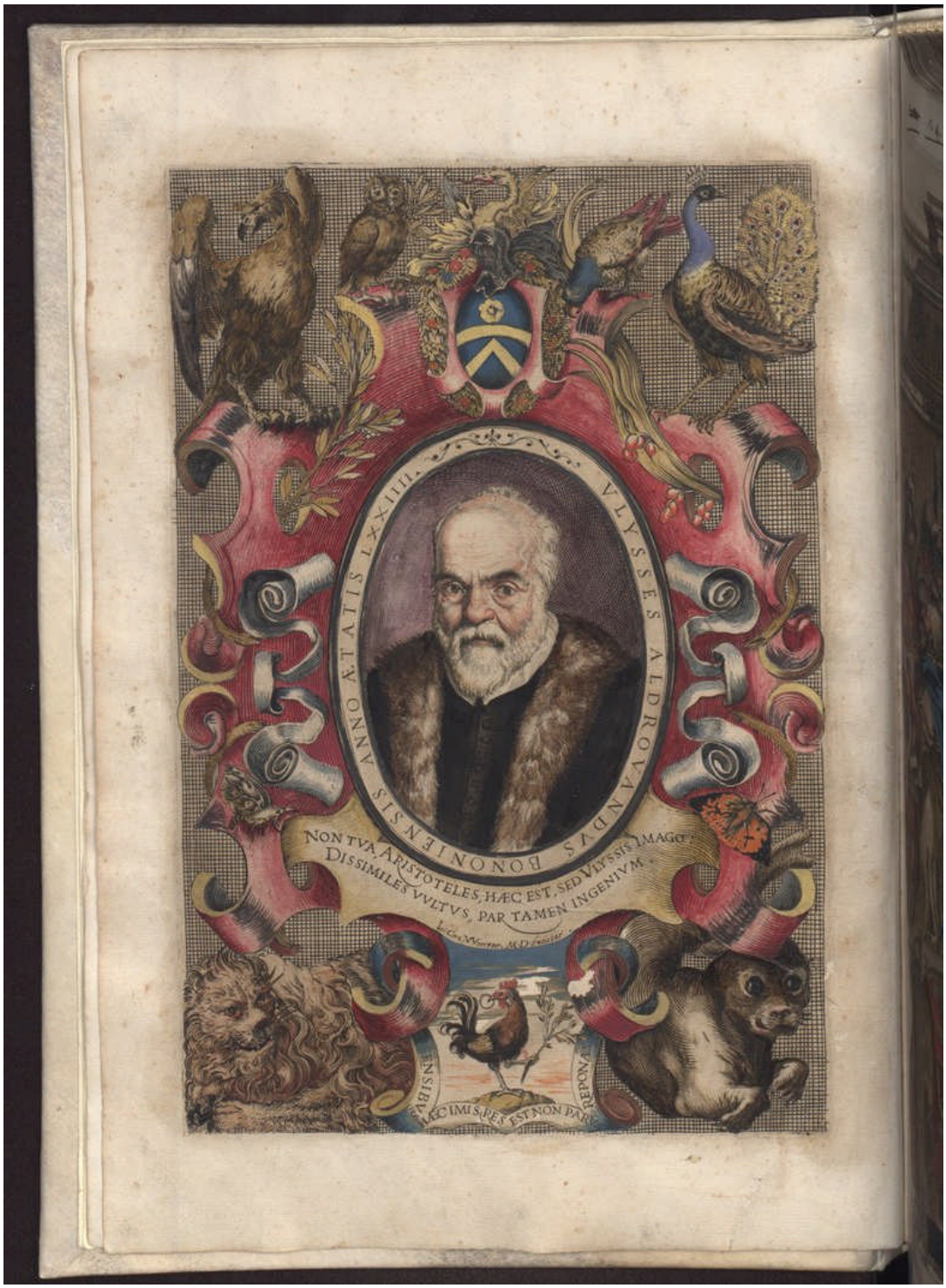


Fig. 121 Fronticepiece, Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae hoc est De avibus historiae libri XII ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo*, Tomus primus, Bononiae, apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599.

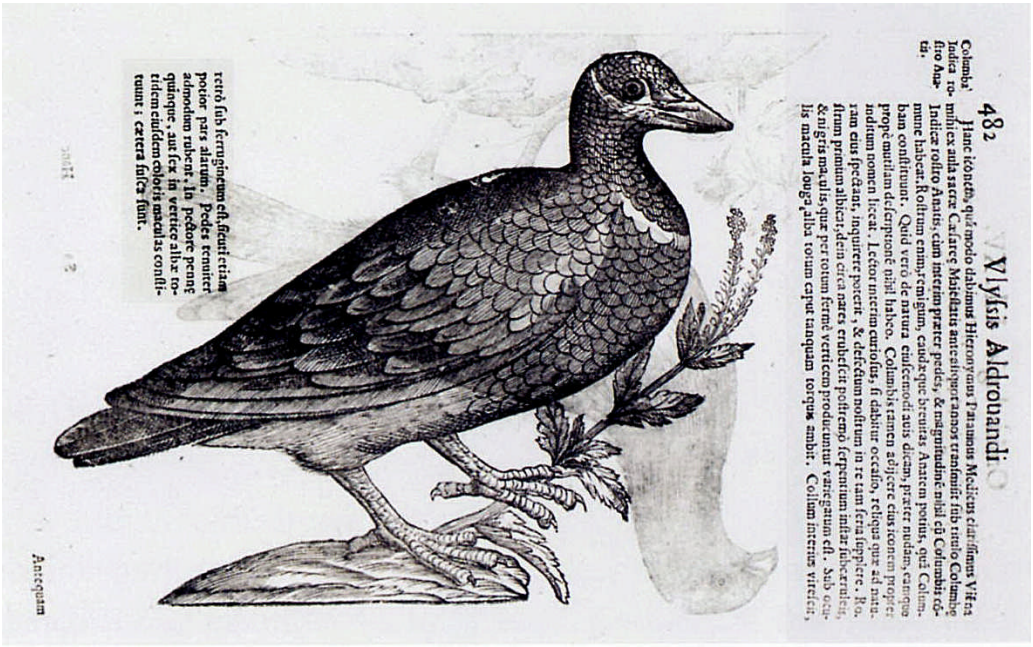


Fig. 122 Blue-headed Quail-dove, in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Bologna: Io. Bapt. Bellagambam, 1600, p.482.

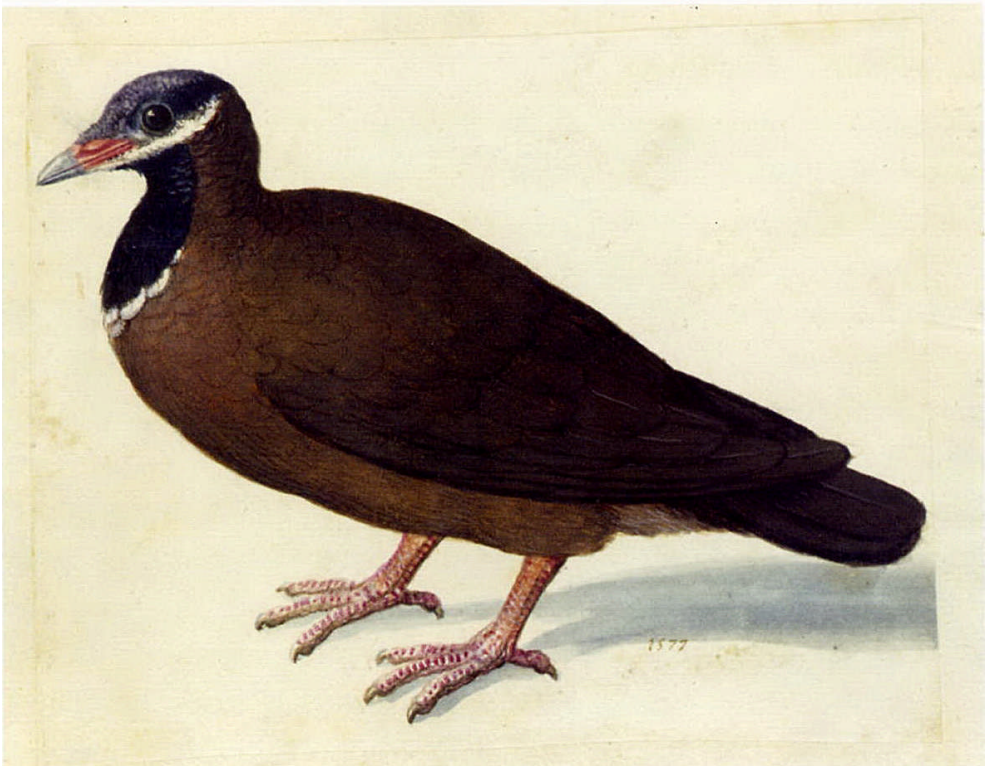


Fig. 123 Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Blue-headed Quail-dove, 1550-85, watercolour on paper or parchment, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Handschriften-, Autographen - und Nachlass-Sammlung, Cod. min. 42, fol.41r (bottom).

Fig. 124 Fronticepiece, Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae hoc est De avibus historiae libri XII ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo,* Vol.1, Bononiae, apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599.

Fig. 125 Jacopo Ligozzi, *Pesce San Pietro* - John Dory (*Zeus faber*),1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour heightened with gold on paper, 27.7 x 39.7 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (2015 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

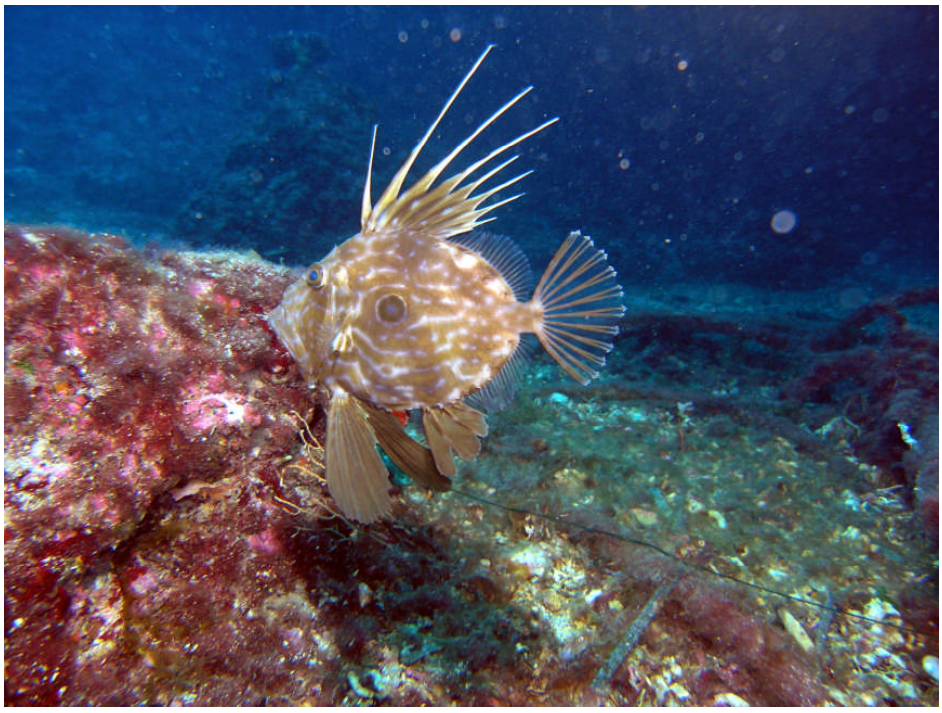


Fig. 126 John Dory (*Zeus faber*).

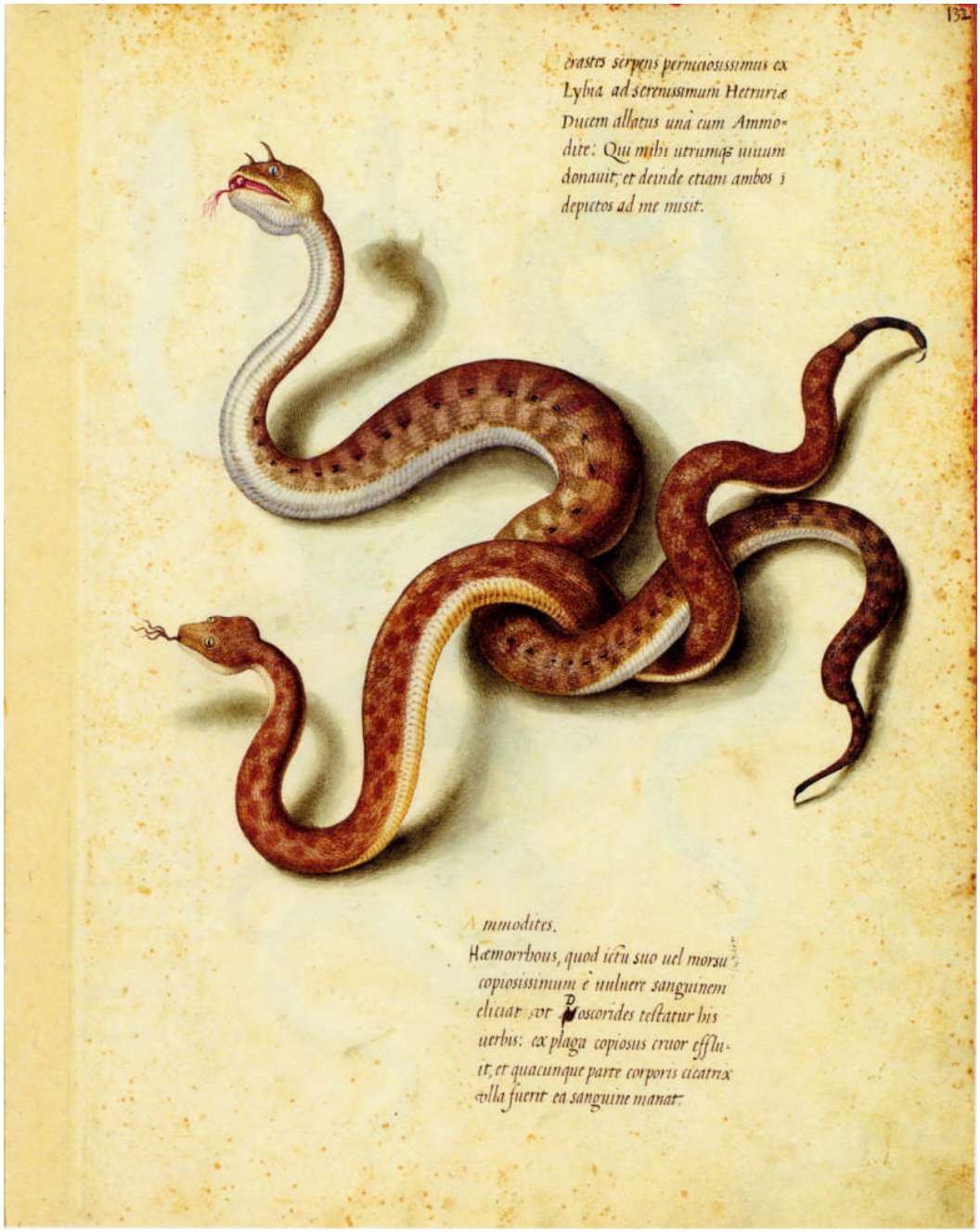


Fig. 127 Jacopo Ligozzi, top - *Horned Viper* (*Cerastes cerastes*), bottom - Sahara sand viper or Avicenna viper (*Cerastes vipera*), 47.5 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7Vols, Ms, Vol. IV, c.132.

Fig. 128 Jacopo Ligozzi, *Bird of Paradise and Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree* (*Vidua macroura, Vidua paradisea, Hypochero chalybeata* ? / *Vidua chalybeata*?, *Ficus carica*), gouache and watercolour on paper, 67 x 45 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano*', 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1958 Orn.).

Fig. 129 Jacopo Ligozzi (attr.) Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*) on a branch of jujube tree (*ziziphus jujuba*), ca.1576/7-87 or 1590, 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, a., c.47.

Fig. 130 Jacopo Ligozzi (attr.), *Paradise bird (Vidua paradisea) and Exotic finch* (*Indigobird? - Hypochero chalybeata* ? or *Vidua chalybeata*?) on a branch of fig tree, ca.1576/7-87 or 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, a., c.48.

Fig. 131 Aldrovandi, Ulisse, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Bologna: Io.Bapt.Bellagamba,1600, p.566.

Fig. 132a Jacopo Ligozzi, *Agouti*, (1957Orn.), (see details Fig.116).

Fig. 132b Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Agouti* (copied from Jacopo Ligozzi original), 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46.0 x 36.0 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.157.

Fig. 133a Jacopo Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa* (1959Orn.). For details see Fig.110a.

Fig. 133b Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi, *Five-toed Jerboa* (copied from Jacopo Ligozzi original), 1590, gouache and watercolour, 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.156.

Fig. 134a Jacopo Ligozzi, Pin-tailed Whydah (Vidua macroura), 46 x 36 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', 7 Vols, Ms, Vol. I, c.47.

Fig. 134b Francesco Cavazzoni ('*delineatore*' - designer), Augusto Veneto ('*intagliatore*'- form-cutter), matrix for Fig. 130a, 1585, incised wood, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, (matrix no. 614).

Fig. 134c Pin-tailed Whydah (Vidua macroura), woodcut print with watercolour, Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae tomus alter...cum indice copiosissimo variarum linguarum*, Bononiae:apud Io.Bapt.Bellagamba,1600, p.565.

Fig. 135a Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, top and centre - Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) male and female, bottom - Pale Rock Sparrow (*Petronia brachydactyla*), (image slightly cropped), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 52.3 x 40 cm, Florence:Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1989 Orn.) Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 135b Detail of Fig. 135a Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*, male).

Fig. 135c Detail of Fig.135a Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*, female).

Fig. 136a Jacopo Ligozzi, 'Indian' falcon (?), ca.1576/7-87, gouache and watercolour on paper, 55 x 42.2 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1971 Orn.), Photo: Nannoni.

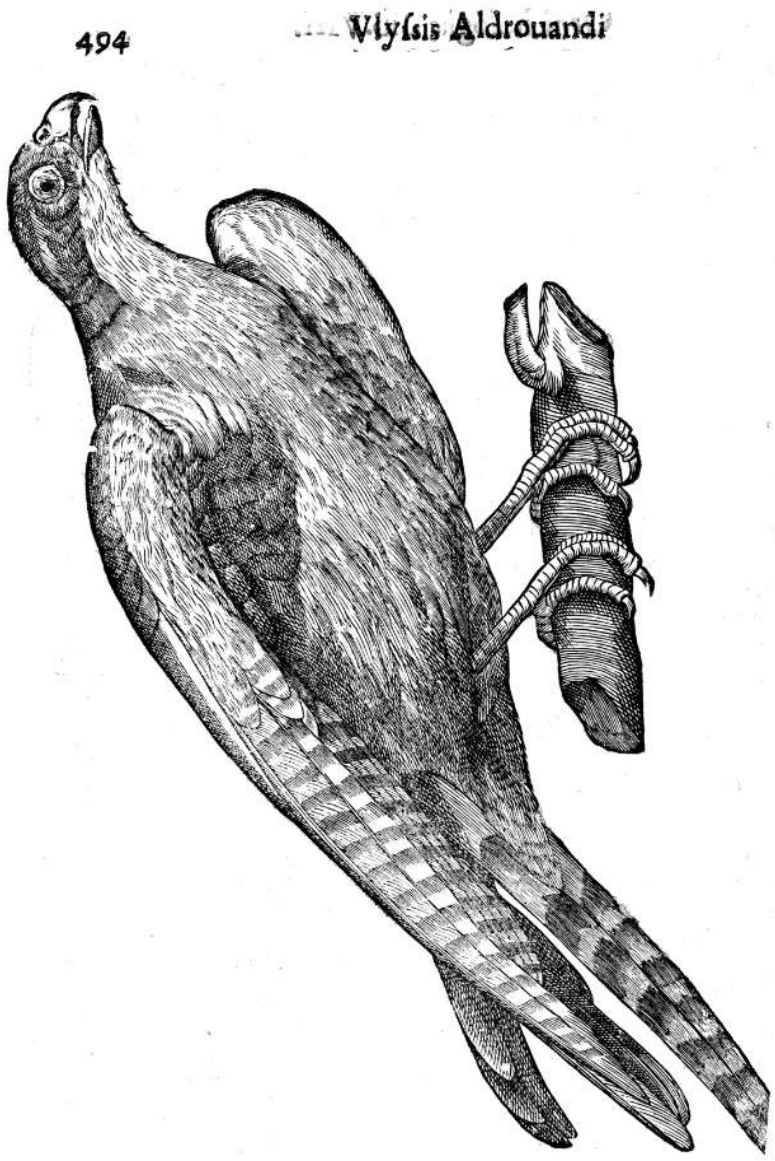


Fig. 136b *Falconum Indicorum* ('Indian' falcon (?)), woodcut print, in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae hoc est De auibus historiae libri 12. ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo*, Bononiae: Tebaldinus, 1637, p.494.

Fig. 137 *Falconum Indicorum* (‘Indian’ falcon (?)), woodcut print and watercolour, in Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Ornithologiae hoc est De auibus historiae libri 12. ... Cum indice septendecim linguarum copiosissimo*, Bononiae: apud Franciscum de Franciscis Senensem, 1599, p.494.

Omnium Animalium. 139

DE APRIS INDICIS.

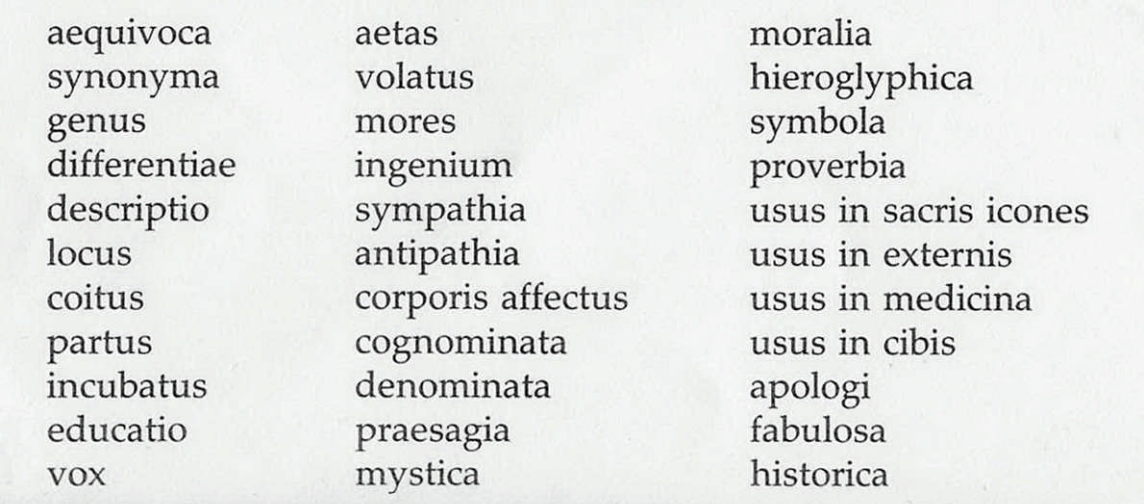
FERAM montanam vocant Indi Coyametl, alij Quapicotl, alij Faiassou, alij Saynum, siue Zainum. Est similis nostrati Apro, minor tamen, & deformior, cum vmbilico supra dorsum, ad regionem renum, & expressus humorem aqueum effundit: non tamen verum vmbilicum esse dicunt, sed veri vmbilici rudimentum: quapropter Scriptores Americanæ Historiæ huiusmodi Apros foramen in dorso habere referunt, vt in icone apparet.

Aper cum foramine in dorso.

Porcus Americanus, siue Zainus.

M 2

Fig. 138 *Porcus Americanus*, woodcut print (see Jacopo Ligozzi's *Collared Peccary*, Fig. 115), Ulisse Aldrovandi, *Monstrorum historia cum Paralipomenis historiae omnium animalium: Bartholomaeus Ambrosinus ... labore, et studio volumen composuit. Marcus Antonius Bernia in lucem edidit. Proprijs sumptibus ... cum indice copiosissimo*, Bologna, 1642, p.139.



aequivoca	aetas	moralia
synonyma	volatus	hieroglyphica
genus	mores	symbola
differentiae	ingenium	proverbia
descriptio	sympathia	usus in sacris icones
locus	antipathia	usus in externis
coitus	corporis affectus	usus in medicina
partus	cognominata	usus in cibis
incubatus	denominata	apologi
educatio	praesagia	fabulosa
vox	mystica	historica

Fig. 139 Aldrovandi's classification table, in Ashworth, Jr., William B., 'Natural history and the emblematic world view', in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. by David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp.303-332, (p.314).

Fig. 140a After designs by Bernardino Poccetti, Jacopo Ligozzi and Daniel Froeschel, *Tabletop with Vases, Grape Clusters, Ears of Wheat and birds*, 1603-1610, *pietre dure* mosaic on a base of oriental chalcedony, 95 x 84 cm, Florence: *Galleria Palatina*, Palazzo Pitti, inv. Oggetti d'Arte, 1911, n.1512.

Fig. 140b (Detail of Fig.140a showing the left half of the table).

Fig. 140c Detail of Fig.140a showing a Paradise bird (left) and a Pin-tailed Whydah (right).

Fig. 140d Jacopo Ligozzi, *Bird of Paradise and Exotic Finches on a Branch of Fig Tree,* 1958 Orn. For details see Fig.128 above.

Fig. 141 Designed by Jacopo Ligozzi, executed by Giovanni Battista Sassi, *Table of Flowers*, 1617-19, *pietra dura* and surrounding boarder made from petrified wood, 113 x 160 cm, Florence: Galleria degli Uffizi, ARTstor Collection Italian and other European Art (Scala Archives), Image and original data provided by SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

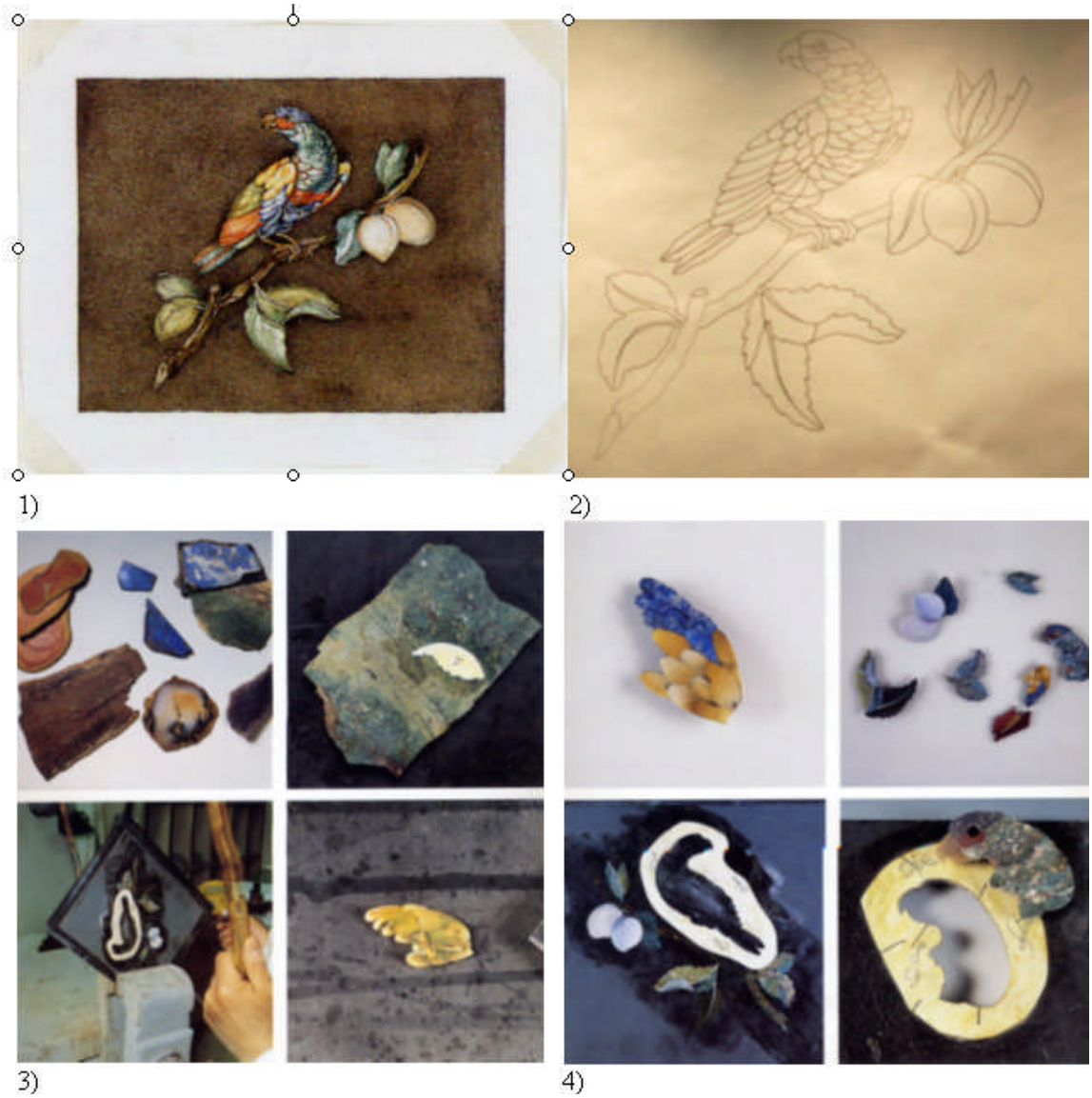


Fig. 142 Illustrations showing the process of *commesso* inlay, source of information and pictures: Giusti, Annamaria, *Pietre Dure and the Art of Florentine Inlay*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2006, Ch.7: 'How a Florentine Mosaic is born', pp.253-255.

1): Model of a bird design rendered in watercolour
2): Tracing taken from the design, showing the segmented sections into which the image will be cut in stone.
3): (clockwise) sample rock slices, paper section to be cut glued on section of rock-slice, slice being cut manually with a bowsaw, 'temporary anchor on the back of inlay section'
4): (top right and left) 'inlay sections ready cut and lined with slate', (bottom right and left) 'The ground in black Belgian marble is cut in its turn to allow a perfect fit with the inlay'.

Fig. 143a Daniel Fröschel, *Cardinal birds* (*Cardinalis virginianus*), gouache on paper, 42 x 27.8 cm, Bologna: Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Fondo Ulisse Aldrovandi, 'Tavole di Animali', Vol. 2, folio 155.

Fig. 143b (Detail of Fig.140a showing motif of Cardinal bird).

Fig. 144 *Parrot on a Branch of Pear Tree*, seventeenth century, *pietre dure* mosaic, 20 x 31 cm, Florence: Museo dell'Opificio dell Pietre Dure, Inv.1905n. 472.

Fig. 145 Jacopo Ligozzi, *African Ring-necked Parakeet (Psittacula krameri) perched on a Plum Branch (Prunus domestica)*, 1576/7-87, gouache on paper, 55 x 42 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano*', 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1952 Orn.).

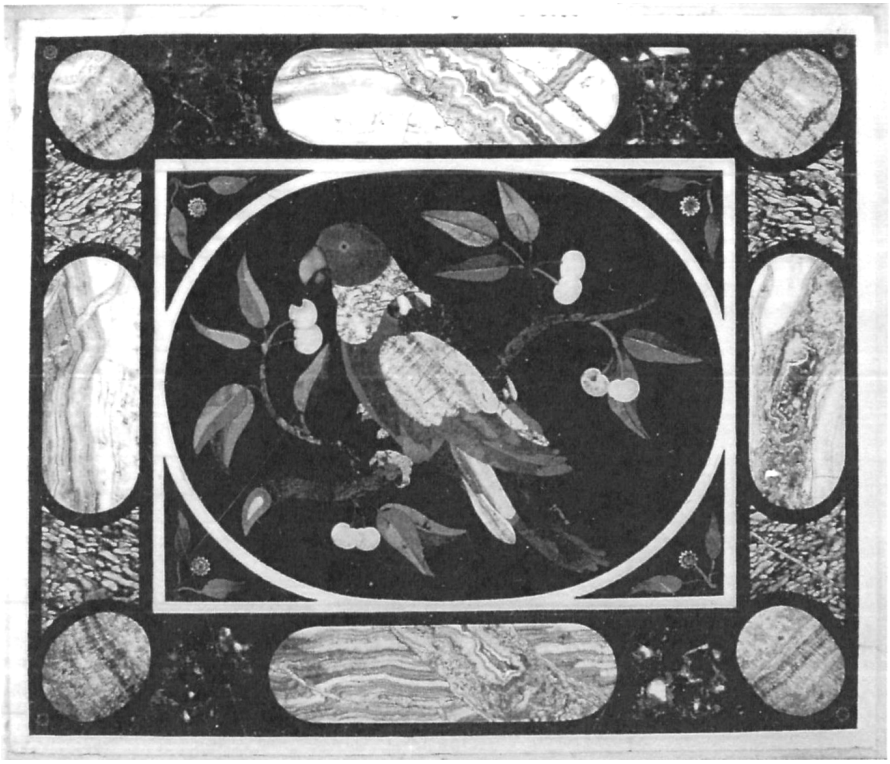


Fig. 146 Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with geometric forms and a parrot on a cherry tree branch*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra tenere*, 62 x 72.5 cm, Villa Medici della Petraia, Inv. ODA 1911, n.200.

Fig. 147 Grand-ducal Workshops, *Tabletop ornamented with flowers and panoplies and parrot* (central detail only), *pietra dura*, early seventeenth century, Hillerød: Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark.

Fig. 148 Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 85 x 116.5 cm, Florence: Museo degli Argenti, Palazzo Pitti.

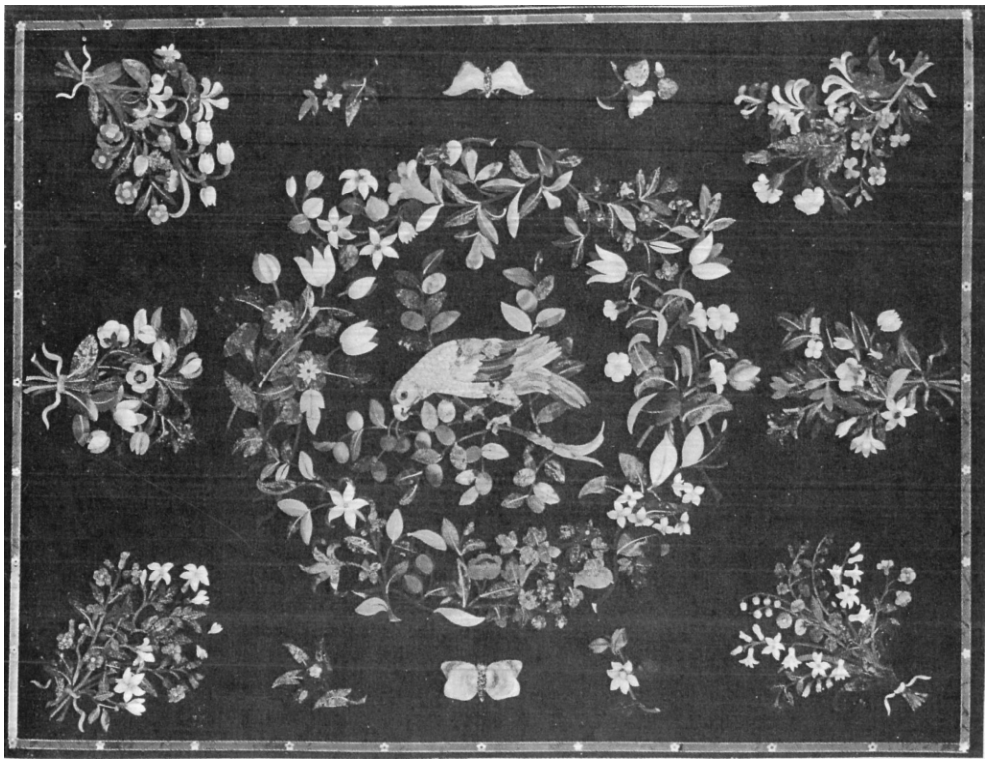


Fig. 149 Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 88 x 118 cm, present location unknown.

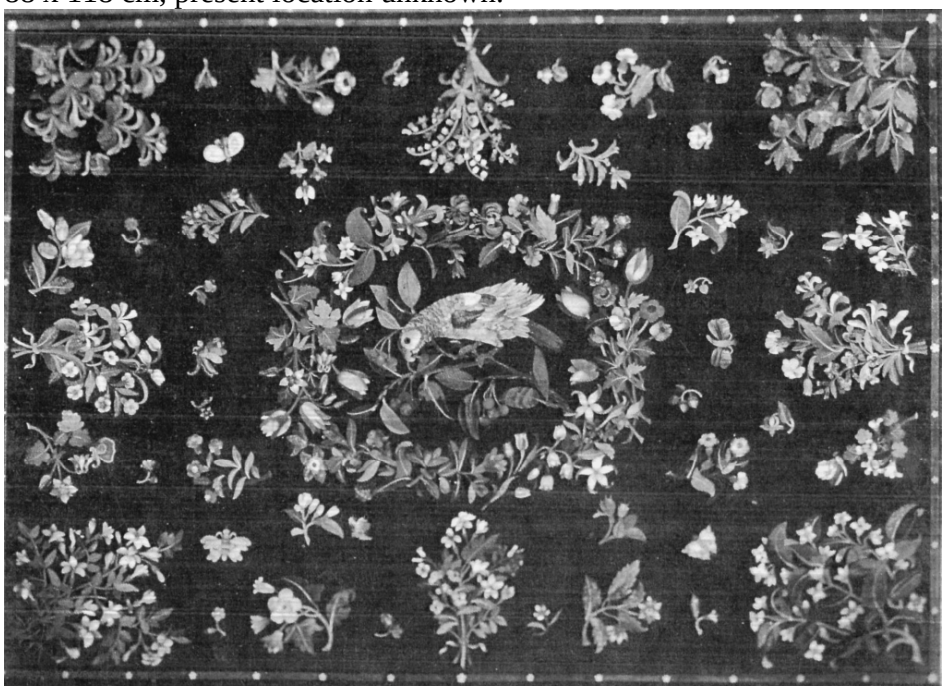


Fig. 150 Florentine Grand-ducal workshops, *Tabletop with a design of flowers and a parrot*, first quarter of the seventeenth century, inlay with *pietra dura* and *pietra tenere*, 107 x 152 cm, Madrid: Museo del Prado.

Fig. 151a Jacopo Ligozzi, Four birds, from top to bottom: 1) unidentified, Great Reed Warbler, (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*), Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 52.7 x 39.2 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1983 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 151b Detail Fig. 151a showing No.1 identification on mounting board: ‘zigogola’ unable to identify the species.

Fig. 151c Detail Fig. 151a showing bird No. 2, Great reed warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*).

Fig. 151d Detail Fig. 151a showing bird No. 3 Yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*).

Fig. 151e Detail Fig. 151a showing bird No. 4, Spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*).

Fig 152a Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, from top to bottom: Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla,* male), Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla,* female), Crested lark (*Galerida cristata*) (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 47 x 33.3 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), *'corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1982 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 152b Detail Fig. 152a showing bird No.1, Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla,* male).

Fig. 152c Detail Fig.152a showing bird No. 2, Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*, female).

Fig. 153a Jacopo Ligozzi, Three birds, top Great tit (*Parus major*), centre European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), bottom Blackcap (Sylvia atricapilla, Motacilla Atricapilla, Linn) (image slightly cropped), gouache on paper, 52.5 x 36.9 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1994 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 153b Detail Fig. 153a showing bird No.1, Great tit (*Parus major*).

Fig. 153c Detail Fig. 153a showing bird No.2, European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*).

Fig. 154a Tabletop with Landscape and birds, Grand-ducal workshop, first half of the seventeenth century, semi-precious hardstone, (no dimensions provided), Florence: Private Collection.

Fig. 154b Detail Fig.154a showing the left half of the tabletop.

Fig. 154c Detail Fig.154a showing the right half of the tabletop.

Fig. 154d Detail Fig. 154a showing an owl with a bird of prey.

Fig. 155 Jacopo Ligozzi, Long-eared owl (*Strix bubo*) (detail), 1576/7-87, gouache on paper, 66.5 x 45.7 cm, Florence: Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe (GDSU), '*corpus ligozziano'*, 1876 Orn.-2136 Orn., (1986 Orn.). Photo: author, October 2009.

Fig. 156a Francesco Fanelli (designer) and Benotti, Domenico (maker), *The John Evelyn Cabinet* (*pietra dura* cabinet formerly belonging to the English diarist John Evelyn), Cabinet: Florence, 1644-1646; stand: England, ca. 1830; Veneered with ebony on a pine carcase, with oak drawer linings; inlaid with panels of Florentine *pietre dure*, contemporary and later bronze mounts, London: Victoria and Albert Museum, British Galleries, Museum number: W.24:1 to 23-1977.

Fig. 156b Detail Fig.156a showing the left half of the cabinet.

Fig. 156c Detail Fig.156a showing the right half of the cabinet.

Fig. 157a *Pietra dura* cabinet: Florence, first half of the seventeenth century; cabinet: northern Europe, mid-seventeenth century; stand: England, c. 1750; *pietre dure*, ebonised wood and gilt base, cabinet: 57.5 x 89.5 x 35.6 cm; stand: 80 x 97.8 x 41.9 cm, London: Gilbert Collection.

Fig. 157b Detail Fig.157a showing the left half of the cabinet.

Fig. 158a *Pietra dura* and cabinet: Florence, Grand Ducal workshop, third quarter seventeenth century; stand: England, first half of nineteenth century; *pietre dure*, jasper, lapis lazuli, marble, ebony, marquetry of exotic woods, rosewood, brass, gilt bronze, gilt brass, silk; cabinet: 56.5 x 115. 9 x 40.3 cm; stand: 80.0 x 129.5 x 42.5 cm, London: Gilbert Collection.

Fig. 158b Detail Fig.158a showing the front of the cabinet without the stand.

Fig. 159a *Pietra dura* and cabinet: Florence, first half of the seventeenth century; cabinet and stand: England, late eighteenth century, Mahogany, *pietre dure*, brass, northern Europe, mid-seventeenth century; stand: England, c. 1750; *pietre dure*, ebonised wood and gilt base, cabinet: 71.1 x 86.8 x 42.1 cm; stand: 78. 4 x 39.4 x 80.6 cm, London: Gilbert Collection.

Fig. 159b Detail Fig.159 a showing the front of the cabinet without the stand.

ILLUSTRATIONS - CHAPTER 5

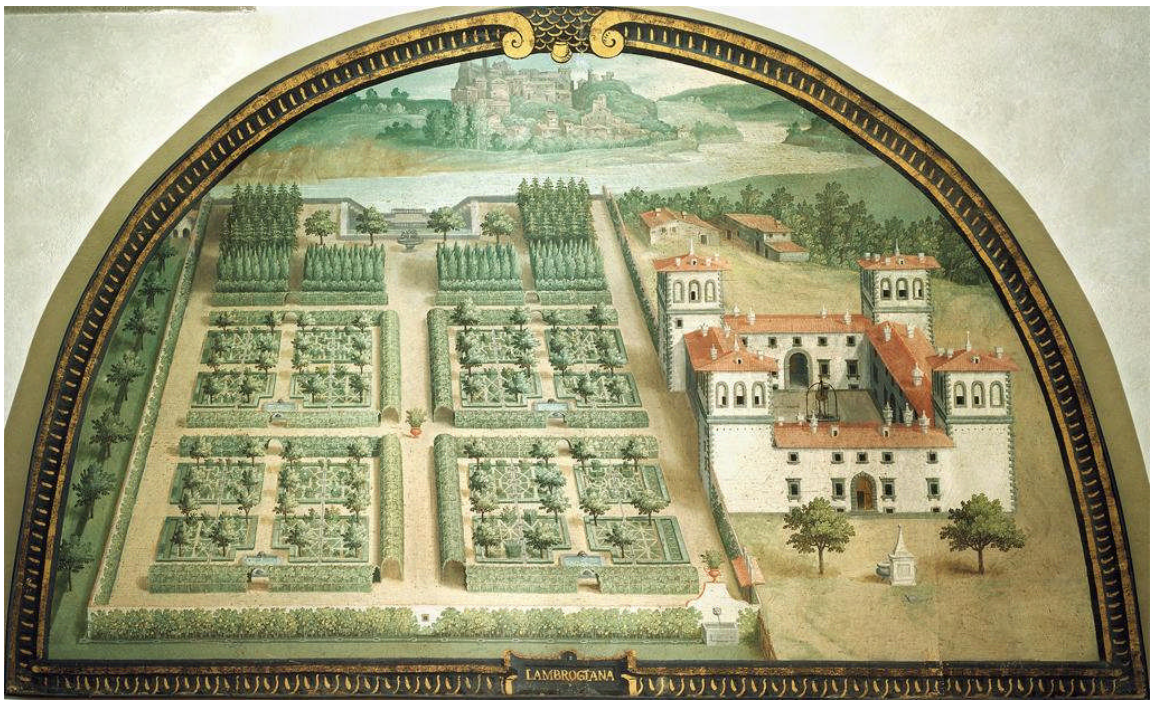


Fig. 160 Giusto Utens, *Medici Villa and Garden l'Ambrogiana*, 1599, tempera on canvas, 144 x 239 cm, 1 of 17 lunettes commissioned by Ferdinando I. Florence: Museo '*Firenze com'era*', SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

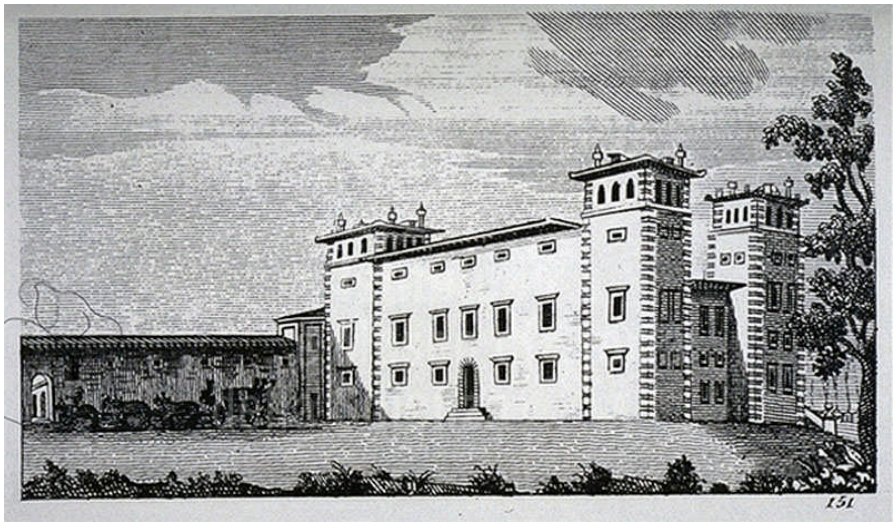


Fig. 161 Engraving of the Villa Medici Ambrogiana, F. Fontani, *Viaggio pittorico della Toscana*, Firenze: V. Batelli, 1827 (3 ed.).© Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza.

Fig. 162 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Garland of Flowers with two Swallows*, ca.1690-1695, oil on canvas, 106 x 87 cm, Florence: Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Inv. n. 928.

Fig. 163 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Three views of a Chinese Golden pheasant* (*Fagiano dorato della Cina in tre vedute*), 1708, oil on canvas, 109 x 140 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4931.

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Fig. 164 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Pears*, 1699, oil on canvas, 169 x 227 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. Castello, n. 611, Photo: Studio Fotografico Tosi, Florence.

Fig. 165a Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Lamb with two heads* (*Agnello a due teste*), 1721, oil on canvas, 58 x 72 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4854.

Fig. 165b
Inscription: 'Nacque il di 20 Febb:o 1720 ad In:e in Giovedi a tre/ ore e mezzo di notte, in un podere della Prio:ia di S. Ange/lo a Bibbione, il presente Agnello bianco maraviglioso/ non solo per Ie due Teste, e due Colli con i suoi Esofaghi, / mà ancora per 1'interiora, che aveva tenendo due Polmo/ni, due Fegati, due Milze, due Cuori, raddoppiati i/ Ventricoli, e gl'Intestini, i quali andavano poi a terminare in un solo. Aveva due soli Lombi, et una sola / Vescica'.

Fig. 166 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Calf with two heads, resting* (*Vitella con due teste, accosciata*), 1719, oil on canvas, 95.2 x 118.7 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4984.

Inscription: ‘Nacque questa Vitellina con due Teste in Fortezza da Basso nell’/ Orto dello Scrittoio delle Possessioni di S.A.R. il Giorno 10 di Maggio 1719. Ciascheduna Testa aveva due Occhi, ma un Orechio solo, onde due soli era/no li Orechi in tutte due Ie Teste, internam:te ciascheduna Testa aveva il suo Cere/ bello proprio e perfetto, vestito con Ie due solite Menbrane come si osserva negl’altri Animali di una Testa sola; Ma il Cerebello, era in ambedue Ie teste unico,/ e comune ad ambedue i Cervelli, e dal detto unico Cerebello procedeva una sola/ Midolla Spinale, giache nella d:a Vitella una sola era la Spina del dorso’.

Fig. 167 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Calf with two heads, standing* (*Vitella con due teste, a piedi*), 1719, oil on canvas, 95 x 118 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4930.

Inscription: ‘Nel Mese di Maggio 1719. Nacque la presente/ Vitellina in un Podere a Filicaia della fattoria di Ca/ lappiano, Campò meno di due giorni, non volse mai/ poppare e premutogli il Latte in una delle due Bocche,/ esciva dall'altra. La Madre patì assai in partorirla,/ e fù vicina a morire’.

Fig. 168 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Squash from the Grand Ducal Garden at Pisa*, 1711, oil on canvas, 95 x 138.5 cm, Florence: Sezione Botanica "F. Parlatore" del Museo di Storia Naturale, University of Florence, Inv. 1930 n.361.

Fig. 169 Bartolomeo Bimbi (attr.), *Two views of a heron taken from the 'Giardino de' Semplici'* (*Guacco dell'orto del Giardino dei Semplici*), 1719, oil on canvas, 74 x 59 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4987.

Inscription: 'Quest'uccello si chiama Guacco / fu morto in Firenze nel Giardino de' Semplici sopra un Platano / il di 25 marzo 1719'.

Fig. 170 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Two views of a heron taken from the Garden of Santissima Annunziata* (*Guacco dell'orto della nunciata*), 1720, oil on canvas, 98 x 79 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4708.

Inscription: 'Specie di Guacco/Ammazzato nell'Orto de' Padri/ della Nunziata, sopra/un Fico/1720'.

Fig. 171 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Exotic and European Birds* (*Uccelli esotici ed europei*), 1731, oil on canvas, 176 x 119 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4863.

Inscription: 'GRANOCHAIA', 'GALLINA VENNE DA BOLOGNA 1687'; 'CAUSALE DETTO LORINO PORTATO DA UN TALE DETTO SCOT(...) NEL 169(...) MORTO IN BOBOLI NEL1700'.

Fig. 172 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Black Hen and Wallkreeper* (*Gallina nera e picchio muraiolo*),1721, oil on canvas, 64 x 52 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4943.

Fig. 173 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Capon, parrot, hen, owl and other birds in a landscape with a fountain* (*Cappone, gallina, pappagallo e due alzavole*), 1734, oil on canvas, 115.5 x 145.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4725.

Inscription: 'GALLINA RICIUTT; GUFO PRESO NEL CAM(PAN)ILE DEL DOMO 1729; PAPPA(GALLO) DEL CAR(DINA)LE FRAN(CES)CO DE' MEDICI; CAP(PO)NE DELLORENZINI PES(A)VA IN (...)'; TUFO'.

Fig. 174 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Farm animals and parrot in a landscape* (*Uccelli da cortile e pappagallo in un paesaggio*), perhaps 1730s oil on canvas, 115 x 145.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4739.

Inscription: 'GALLINA VENUTA DA AREZZO 1732, GALLO DI MALTA PESAVA (LIBRE) XI; RARA DEL CAR(DINALE) FRA(CES)CO 1710; PICCIONE DI SPAGNA; GALLINA NATA IN MIGLIARINO 1730'.

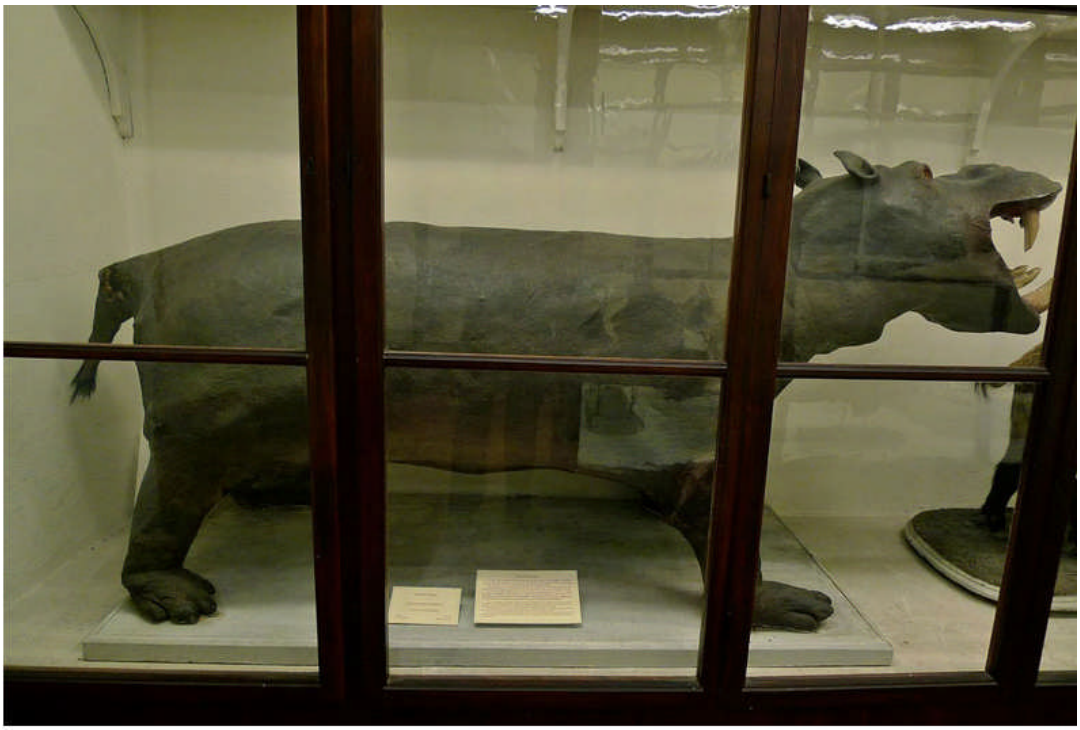


Fig. 175 Stuffed and mounted Hippopotamus, seventeenth century, Florence: Museum of Natural History (*La Specola*).

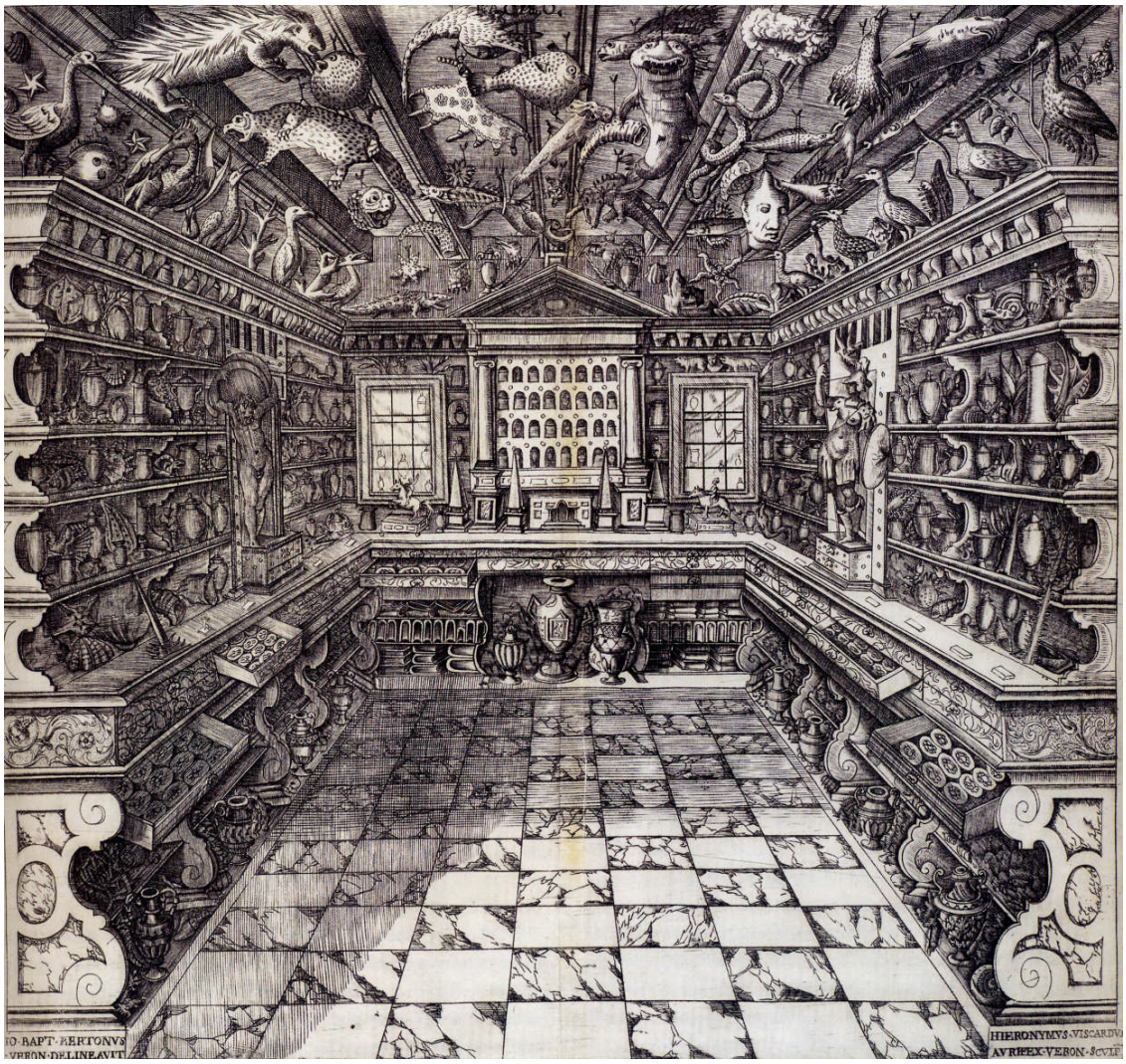


Fig. 176 The Museum of Francesco Calceolari in Verona, Ceruti, B., and Chiocco, A., *Musaeum Francisci Calceolari*, Verona: 1622.

Fig. 177 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *An eagle with its prey* (Falco, aquila, anatra selvatica e cicogna), 1731(?), oil on canvas, 117 x 146 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4869.

Fig. 178 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Flamingo with white Arctic Fox* (*Caracos e volpe bianca*), 1717, oil on canvas, 114.2 x 174.3 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4942.

Fig. 179a

Fig. 179b

Fig. 179c

Fig. 179a For details see Fig.171.

Fig. 179b Southern cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius*)

.

Fig. 179c Photo: Steve Gantlett, Little egret, Whitwell Scrape, Cley, 28th June 2007.

Fig. 180 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Birds and a monkey in a landscape with flowers* (*Uccelli e una scimmia in un paesaggio con fiori*), 1734, oil on canvas, 116 x 87 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4713.

Inscription: ‘sul ramo in alto GIA(N)DA/IA MARINA; sotto 1'uccello in basso a sinistra GALLINA PRATAROLA; sotto 1'uccello a destra CICOGNA 1727’.

Fig. 181a Gray heron (*Ardea cinerea*).

Fig. 181b American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*), whose primary and outer secondary feathers are black, and whose bill and gular pouch are flesh coloured or yellow.

Fig. 182 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Birds in a landscape* (*Uccelli in un paesaggio*),1734, oil on canvas, 117 x 87 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4988.

Inscription: ‘sotto l’uccello in basso a sinistra MIGNATAIO; sotto l’uccello in basso a destra GROTTO DEL CON (TE ?) GOFEL 1729; sotto l’uccello in alto a sinistra PICCONE [sic] DEL GIAPPONE PESAVA L(IBBRE) 5; sul ramo su cui posa l'uccello in alto a destra MERLO INDIANO’.

Fig. 183 Bartolomeo Ligozzi (son of Francesco di Mercurio), *Still-life with fruit, a vase of flowers, a tortoise, a squirrel, and a guinea pig* (*Natura morta con frutta, un vaso di fiori, una tartaruga, uno scoiattolo e un porcellino d'India*), second half of seventeenth century, oil on canvas, 90 x 115 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. Castello, n 617.

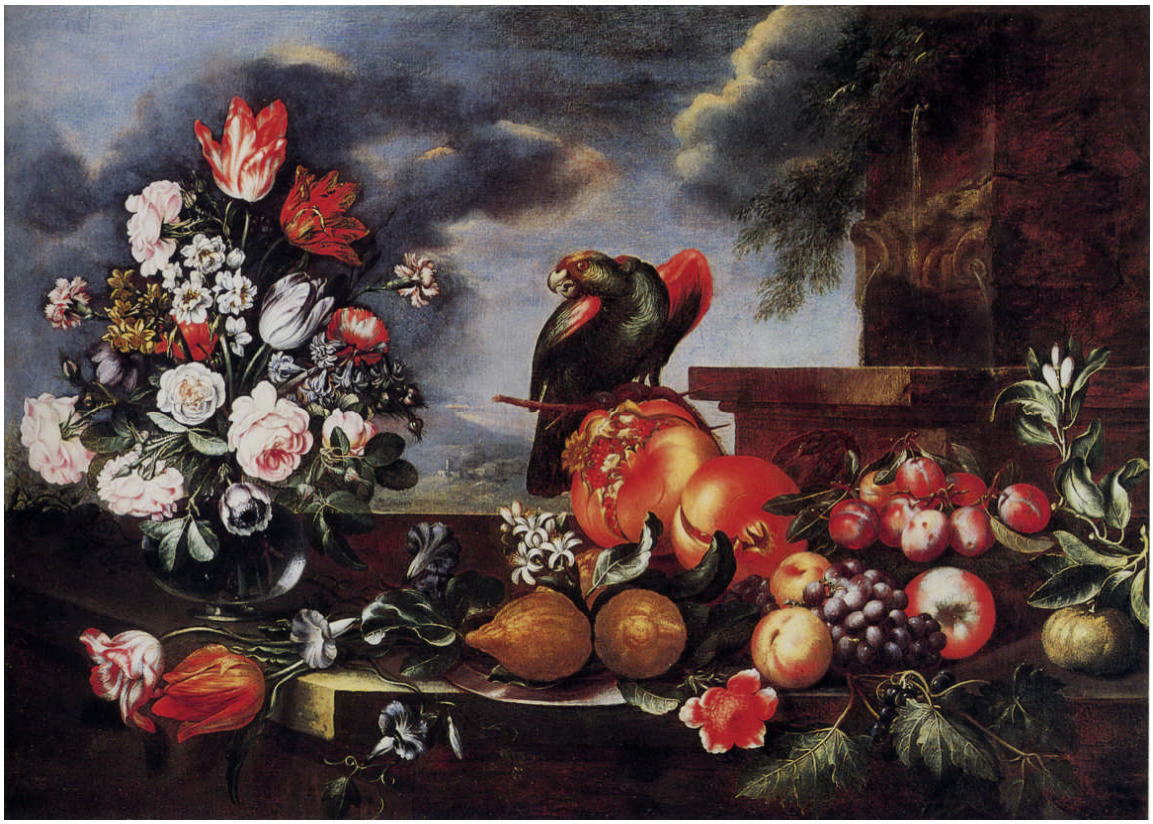


Fig. 184 Bartolomeo Ligozzi (son of Francesco di Mercurio), *Still-life with fruit, parrot and a vase of flowers* (*Natura morta con frutta, pappagallo, e vaso di vetro con fiori*), second half of seventeenth century, oil on canvas, 107 x 74.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. Poggio Imperiale 1860. n. 1774.

Fig. 185 Bartolomeo Bimbi (attr.), *Dead Hare and other game* (*Lepre morta e altra caccia*), 1720, oil on canvas, 101 x 78.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 5587.

Fig. 186 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Squirrel and a brown rat* (*Scoiattolo e topo*), 1719, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 77.8 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4827.

Fig. 187 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Great Horned Owl and Barn Owl with their prey* (*Barbagianni con piccione e gufo con tordo*), 1717, oil on canvas, 118 x 95 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4711.

Fig. 188 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Norwegian Falcon and two Larks* (*Falcone di Norvegia e due lodole*), 1709, oil on canvas, 73 x 58.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4835.

Fig. 189 Bartolomeo Bimbi (attr.), *A seagull with an eel in its beak* (*Gabbino con anguilla nel becco*), 1722, oil on canvas, 74 x 58.2 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 4935.

Fig. 190a Jan Brueghel the Elder, *The Temptation of Adam and Eve*, 1612, oil on panel, 50.3 x 80.1 cm, Rome: Galleria Pamphilj Doria, FC341.

Fig. 190b Detail of Fig. 190a.

Fig. 191 Jan Brueghel the Younger II, *Paradise*, ca.1620, oil on oak, Berlin: Staatliche Gemäldegalerie.

Fig. 192 Bartolomeo Bimbi, *Still-life with shells*, ca.1713, oil on canvas, 97.5 x 120 cm, Siena: Palazzo della Provincia.

Fig. 193 Pietro Neri Scacciati (attr.), *Allegorical scene with monkeys, parrots and a cat* (*Scena allegorica con scimmie, pappagalli e un gatto*), 1733, oil on canvas, 88 x 116.5 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 6704.

Fig. 194 David Teniers the Younger II, *Concert with monkeys* (*Concerto di scimmie*), miniature on parchment, 22 x 30 cm, Florence: State Galleries of Florence, Inv. 1890, n.834.

Fig. 195 David Teniers the Younger II, *Monkeys Drinking and Smoking*, 1630s, oil on wood, 21 x 30 cm, Madrid: Repository Museo del Prado, Inv.1809, ARTstor Collection Art, Archaeology and Architecture (Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives) ID Number 40-06-15/47, Source Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.

Fig. 196 Anonymous artist, *John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester* (image slightly cropped), oil on canvas, ca.1665-1670, 127 x 99.1 cm, London: National Portrait Gallery, Inv. NPG 804.

Fig. 197 ‘Le singe à la mode: Dedié aux petits Maistre francois’ (The modish monkey: Dedicated to French dandies), Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département d’Estampes, Collection Hennin, vol. 109, #9571, Qb 1775.

Fig. 198 Giambattista Tiepolo, *A Young Woman with a Macaw*, ca.1760, Oil on canvas, 70 x 52 cm, Oxford: Ashmolean Museum.

Fig. 199 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Barn owls, a millenarian parrot and other parrots* (*Barbagianni, pappagallo millenario e altri pappagalli*), 1730s, oil on canvas, 116 x 45 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4741.

Fig. 200 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *Combat between four species of owls and three parrots* (*Combattiento: gufo, barbagianni, civetta, greppio e pappagalli*),1730s, oil on canvas, 115 x 144 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1890 n. 4868.

Fig. 201 Pietro Neri Scacciati, *A sparrowhawk, swallow, tawny owl with a thrush, a cercopithecus or Barbary monkey, a dead Eurasian jay and other dead birds with flowers and a pomegranat*e (*Un greppio, una rondine, un gufo con un tordo, una bertuccia e altri uccelli con fiori e melegrane*), 1734, oil on canvas , 116 x 87 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv.1890 n. 6520.

Fig. 202 Anonymous English, William Brooke, 10th Lord Cobham and his Family, (INSCRIBED ON TABLET: An◦.*DN*. 1568), oil on canvas, 102.6 x 130.5 cm, Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth.

Fig. 203 Pietro Navarra, *Still-life with dead birds, cabbage, fruit and mushrooms*, ca.1690-1710, oil on canvas, 61 x 73 cm, Poggio a Caiano: Villa Medici, Museo della Natura Morta, Inv. 1860 n. 122.

APPENDIX - 1
Table of Medici Dynasty

Influential male members of the Medici family during the Florentine Republican phase	Dates of birth and death and duration of office
Cosimo *il Vecchio*	1389-1464
Piero di Cosimo (*il Gottoso*)	1416-1469
Lorenzo *il Magnifico*	1449-1492
Piero di Lorenzo	1472-1503
Giovanni di Lorenzo (later Pope Leo X)	1475-1521 / Pope Leo X from 1513)
Giuliano, Duke of Nemours	1479–1516
Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino	1492-1519 /Duke of Urbino from 1516)
Giulio (later Clement VII)	(1478-1534/ Pope Clement VII from1523)
Medici rulers during the Ducal and Grand-ducal phase of the *Principato*	Dates of birth and death and reign
Alessandro	1510-1537 Duke of Florence 1531-1537
Cosimo I	1519-1574 Duke of Florence 1537-1569, Grand Duke of Tuscany 1569-1574
Francesco I	1541-1587 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1574-1587
Ferdinando I	1549-1609 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1587-1609
Cosimo II	1590-1621 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1609-1621
Ferdinando II	1610-1670 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1621-1670
Cosimo III	1642-1723 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1670-1723
Ferdinando (Grand Prince of Tuscany)	1663-1713
Gian Gastone	1671-1737 Grand Duke of Tuscany 1723-1737

APPENDIX - 2
Transcribed extract from Vincenzio Follini and Modesto Rastrelli, *Firenze antica e moderna illustrata* - describing the *Serraglio de Leoni* near San Marco in Florence

'Dove ora si vede la vasta Fabbrica delle Reali Scuderie dalla parte di levante, sulla Piazza accennata di S. Marco, eravi anticamente un Serraglio di Fiere, con Cortile per la caccia di esse, Casa per il Custode, ed altre adiacenze.[...] Si entrava nella medesima da due Porte; la prima metteva in un vasto prato, che corrispondeva in parte all'abitazione del custode, e dava finalmente ingresso ad una specie di cortile, da cui si saliva alle logge dell'anfiteatro ove sifacevano le cacce. L'altra piccolo porta era quasi sulla cantonata che volta verso la SS. Annonziata, e questa metteva in un andito, che per una parte corrispondeva sulla strada, e per I'altra sulle corticelle ove stavano Ie fiere, con altrettante finestre ferrate, doe una per corticella, e di contro altra sulla strada, di dove vedevansi Ie fiere; e auesto andito terminava nel preaccennato cortile d'ingresso e di li si passava per una spaziosa porta all'anfiteatro, che serviva per Ie cacce, e che non era molto grande, di figura ovale, e le cui mura terminavano in una terrazza coperta, con colonnine, sponde ecc. Sotto a questa terrazza corrispondeva un corridore, al piano stesso del cortile, e vi erano delle finestre ferrate, di dove pure si godevano Ie cacce: gli animali feroci venivano introdotti nell'Anfiteatro per alcune vie sotterranee, che comunicavano alle loro stanze; ed i tori, cavalli, o altri animali che dovevano combattere con le fiere, vi si ponevano per la porta che corrispondeva al primo cortile [...].L'ultimo di questi spettacoli fu dato I'anno 1737 nell'Anfiteatro, o Cortile predetto del Serraglio, in occasione dell'avvenimento al Trono di Toscana del Granduca Francesco II di Lorena, poi Imperatore de' Romani.'[1]

[1] Description of the *Serraglio de leoni* from Follini,Vincenzio and Modesto Rastrelli, *Firenze antica e moderna illustrata*, 8 Vols., Firenze: Jacopo Grazioli, 1789-1802, Vol. 3 (1791), pp.236-39.

APPENDIX - 3

Transcribed extract from Cesare Agolanti's *La Descrizione di Pratolino del Ser.mo Gran Duca di Toscana Poeticamente Descritto da M. Cesare Agolanti Fiorentino*[2]

1

Quivi il pavon vie più che neve bianco,
Vide con Clori, che superbo e vago
Or il petto, et or I'uno, or I'altro fianco,
Vagheggiandosi ruota, e vie più vago
Si mostra, e poi di rotar s'è stanco;
Rende I'altro pavon men bello e vago,
Come di più valore, ond'è ragione
Dir, che simili a quel gli abbia Giunone.

2

Canori cigni de' poeti insegna,
In chiara linfa Ie candide piume
Bagnarsi vide ancor con lei, ch'è degna
Che I'ami e 'nchini ogni mortale e Nume;
Che cantando il lor canto udir non sdegna
Febo, e s'arresta ogni ruscello e fiume,
Che scorra da I'asprissimo Appennino,
O suo' gioghi entro o presso Pratolino.

3

Cristati augelli d'lndia, anitre ancora
In isola entr'un bagno, mostrogli ella,
E quivi mille fiere far dimora,
Grate a Febo e Diana, ardente e bella;
Cervi, per cui sovviemmi il caso ogn'ora
Del misero Ateone, e'n questa e'n quella
Parte scorrere il caprio, e le garzelle
D'Alessandria d'Egitto, altiere e snelle.

4

II coniglio e la lepre paurosa,
Tra cespo e cespo di tenera erbetta,
Vide ei fuggir, la starna spaventosa,
La pernice, il fagian, la vezzosetta
Polla di faraon, la dolorosa
Tortora, che in bel verde plora, e alletta
La compagna; e d'augelli e fiere quante
Sorti son da I'Occaso e dal Levante.

5

La fol[aga] e lo struzzo, ed il gentile
[...ce...];[3] onde ringrazia l'alma Clori;
Sente mormorio d'acque e'n dolce stile
Cantar di Pratolino i degni onori,
cui non fu, né sarà mai simile,
Fin che ne mostra il sol gli aili splendori:
E di bronzi e di marmi scorge ornati
Ricetti d'acque, e fonti a Dei sacrati.[4]

---

[2] The above has made use of the transcript in Heikamp,1994, pp.132-33, only the octaves relating to animals have been selected; for the undated manuscript see Agolanti, Cesare, *La Descrizione di Pratolino del Ser.mo Gran Duca di Toscana Poeticamente Descritto da M. Cesare Agolanti Fiorentino*, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, MS, Magliabechiana, Classe VII, Codice 8.47.

[3] Heikamp notes that the word is illegible.

[4] Agolanti, MS, Magliabechiana, Classe VII, Codice 8.47, cc.44r.-45r.

APPENDIX - 4

Transcribed extract from Gateano Cambiagi's *Descrizione dell' Imperiale Giardino di Boboli* - describing the *Serraglio degli animali rari*

'Dopo la detta Statua trovasi una Casa, che serve di abitazione del Custode degli animali rari, che in questo Giardino presto alla medesima si racchiudono, in un serraglio circondano da un muro, nel quale in giusta distanza sonovi otto finestre ferrate, di dove vendonsi alcuni dei medesimi animali e queste sono all'intorno tutte abbellite di vari lavori di rozze spugne, e Mosaico, in una delle quali per disotto rimirasi un'antico bassorilievo, e in un'altra una lastra di marmo posta a rovescio, con l'arme della famiglia del Barba di Pisa, con l'appresso parole: "*Sepulcrum Choli de Barba, & Heredum eius*"; e negli spazi da una finestra all'altra le danno finimento alcune piante di Lauro;

Dentro poi rarissimi Animali condotti dalle più remote Regioni vi si conservano tanto Volatili, che Quadrupedi racchiusi in diversi Spartimenti, e recinti, separati gl'uni dagl'altri, come pure in uno di questi molti di essi animali già morti, quali feccati, e ripieni appariscono nell'istessa forma, come se vivi fostero. Quivi pure in alcune nicchie son collocate diverse Statue di marmo, l'ultima delle quali rappresenta Morgante Nano, scolpita da Valerio di Simone Cioli, (quale anco diverse antiche Statue manomesse nella Galleria del Duca Cosimo con somma intelligenza dell'arte racconciò,) e nella fine del Serraglio in piana terra, si vedono altre sei Statue pure di marmo di maniera antica, ciascuna delle quali ha un istrumento da suono nelle mani, e siccome queste hanno per di dietro nel torso alcuni anelli di ferro impiombati, probabilmente si può credere, siano state in qualche muraglia di edifizio antico. Altra statua simile si vede sopra una fontana contigua alla Parete di detto serraglio, come pure due altre piccole Statuette di pietra sono poste nella parti laterali alla fine del medesimo.

Sono degne di osservazione in questo recinto, alcune urnette antiche quadre di marmo, poste in diversi luoghi del medesimo sopra alcuni muri, che di presente ripiene di terra, se ne servono per vasi da fiori, tralle quali ne sono tre con l'appresso Inscrizioni.

T. ACVRIVS FE
LIX. VIX. ANN. III
MEN. III. DIEB. VII
DVLCISSIMVS

D. M.
ATIMETVS | VL I AE
ZOSIMENI CON|VCIb. M
D. D

DI|S MANIEVS
L. VETVRI. SABINE LIB.
ABASCANTI

Il fu Chiarissimo Proposto Anton Francesco Gori le ha riportate nel Tomo I. della raccolta dell'Inscrizioni antiche della Toscana a 306., di più ne descrive ancora la seguente a 305. che dice essere incise in *Urnula Marmorea rotunda*; la quale con tutte le diligenze da me fatte non è stato possibile il rinvenirla, e sol tanto la riporterò sulla fede di si celebre autore.

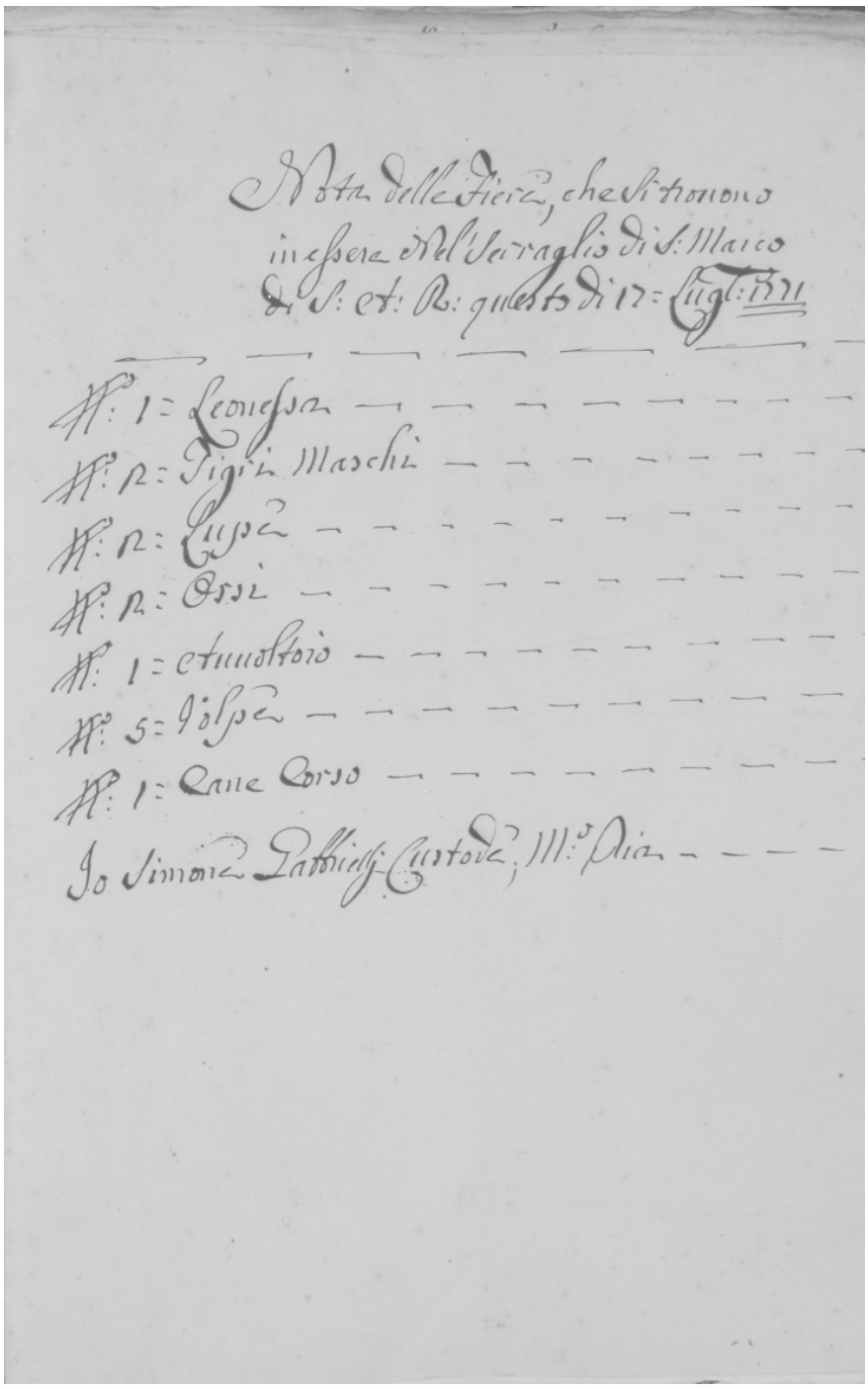
D. M.
FAVSTO AVC. LIB. ADIVT.
TABVL. CASTR.
CORNELIA IVSTA CONIVGI
BENEMERENTI
FECIT

Similmente meritano attenzione due coperchi di antichi Sepolcri di marmo, che di presente si trovano posati sopra una muraglia all'ingresso del recinto medesimo, de'quali pure ne fa menzione il sopra lodato Proposto Gori in detto Tomo I. a 287.

Esciti dal Serraglio, e prendono il camino per la strada s'incontrano a mano destra diversi viali, che conducono all'altro Stardone in faccia dell'Isola già descritto [….]'[5]

[5] Cambiagi, Gaetano, *Descrizione dell' Imperiale Giardino di Boboli fatta da Gaetano Cambiagi*, Firenze: Stamperia Imperiale, 1757, pp.61-65.

APPENDIX - 5


Nota delle Fiere, che si trovano
in essere nel Serraglio di S. Marco
di S. et R. questo dì 17 Luglio 1771

N. 1 = Leonessa
N. 2 = Figli Maschi
N. 2 = Lupa
N. 2 = Orsi
N. 1 = Cinghiale
N. 5 = Volpe
N. 1 = Cane Corso
Io Simone Pabbriff Custode, M.p. Mia

Document dated 17 July 1771 listing the animals that were present at the Serraglio de leoni, ASF, Segreteria di Finanza, 477 (unpaginated), folder entitled: '*Serraglio delle fiere in Firenze*'.

APPENDIX - 6

***Medici Archive Project* database of documents relating to animals exotic and unusual**

Gifts made to the Medici by other court	48 docs
Animals procured via agents	20 docs
Gifts from Medici to other courts	20 docs
Requests from other individuals	5 docs
other	11 docs

Cosimo I
Francesco I
Ferdinando I
Cosimo II
Ferdinando II
Cosimo III

Mediceo del Principato (MdP)	Pezzo	DocID	Insert no.	Carta (folio)	Date of document	Item No.
Cosimo I Jan 1537 - April 1574						
Gift of unspecified animals to Cosimo I	3	DocID 19889	Ins.1	117	Feb. 13, 1540	1
Cosimo I sends two lions and horses unspecified to foreign court	4	DocID 12664		83	12 June 1541	2
Cosimo I sends two lion cubs to lion cubs to Otto Heinrich von der Pfalz	600	DocID 6738		9v.	31 Mar. 1542	3
Battle between a dwarf and a monkey	1171	DocID 6488	Ins. 2	62r.	29 June 1544	4
Instructions for care of animals at Castello (not clear if wild or exotic)	1170a	DocID 670	Ins. 3	109	28 Aug. 1545	5
Notification of arrival of fowl and ducks from the Indies	1172	Doc ID7799	Ins. 2	27r.	11 May 1546	6
Eleonora de Toledo requests purchase of civet or polecat from Venice for musk	1172	DocID 7769	Ins. 7	21	Dec 17, 1546	7
Several animals dispatched from Pisa to Florence (unspecified)	1172	DocID 20510	Ins. 7	49	29 Dec. 1546	8
Two baboons sent as gift by Olivieri Michele to Eleonora de Toledo	1173	DocID 8169	Ins. 8	356	Oct 12, 1547	9
Cosimo I offers to send gift of lions to King Henri II of France and	9	DocID 4845		561	6 and 26 Mar1548	10

Catherine de' Medici, Informs that no new cubs born	11	DocID 6942		48	Apr. 16,1548	11
Lion cubs for French Royal Court	11	DocID 19754		154	May 12,1548	12
Guidobaldo II della Rovere asks Cosimo I for a lion	4050	DocID 22211		113	23 Mar. 1549	13
Cosimo I informs Guidobaldo II della Rovere that he can offer him only a sterile lioness and a bear	1169	DocID 2352	Ins.6	202	29 Mar. 1549	14
	1175	DocID 514	Ins.3	3	12 Apr. 1549	15
Cosimo I promises to send Indian ducks to for Isabella di Capua-Gonzaga	13	DocID 20978		70	Oct 18, 1549	16
Transfer of animals from Palazzo Vecchio to Via del Maglio,	613	DocID 18202	Ins.6	51	Nov. 2, 1550	17
	613	DocID 18099	Ins.6	81	Nov17, 1550	18
Lion cubs moved from Florence to Pisa, Bachiacca instructed to draw live birds	1176	DocID 3212	Ins.11	19r.	23 Feb. 1551	19
Two lionesses sent as gift from Pope Julius III to Cosimo I de' Medici	401 Micro-film	DocID 19600		476	26 Feb. 1551	20
	401 Micro-film	DocID 6911		555	6 Mar. 1551	21
	1176	DocID 3232	Ins.11	35r.	8 Mar. 1551	22
Treatment of sick tiger at menagerie	613	DocID 18081	Ins.6	14	Mar 10, 1550	23
Parrot and kitten sent as gifts to Eleonora de Toledo from Balduino del Monte, the brother of Pope Julius III	1176	DocID 3205	Ins.11	2r.	14 Sept. 1551	24
	1176	DocID 3221	Ins.11	27	Oct. 24, 1551	25
Animals (possibly exotic) sent by Bishop Zambeccari from Portugal	418a	DocID 3541		1216	? Mar. 1553	26
Eleonora requests purchase of male lion in Alexandria for Cosimo I	5922b	DocID 3333		17v.	30 Dec. 1553	27

Cosimo I informed of availability of very expensive tiger, refuses purchase and requests leopards for hunting instead	521a	DocID 9471		314	Dec. 3, 1556	28
	639	DocID 9474		318	Dec 23, 1556	29
Germano degli Angeli confirms purchase of another tiger and falcon	465	DocID 16876		445	1557	30
Bastiano Campana, Provveditore in Livorno, forwards exotic animals, a musk, and gazelles	479	DocID 9567		173	June 3, 1559	31
	479	DocID 20232		209	June 4, 1559	32
Cosimo I informed of arrival of Slavic birds, by Capitano Generale, Fregoso Aurelio.	479	DocID 20510		428	July. 5, 1559	33
Cosimo I receives request for male lion for breeding purposes from Alonso Pimentel	3108	DocID 12282		27	9 Mar. 1560	34
Cosimo I thanks Foresi Forese for procuring wide-tailed sheep and requests more	214	DocID 22297		4	Aug 20, 1560	35
Cosimo I reminded of request for male lion for Alonso Pimentel	3108	DocID 17319		119	2 Oct. 1560	36
Notification of ostrich sent from Livorno to Florence	516a	DocID 21513		681	July 10,1565	37
Cosimo I issues several requests to obtain wild animals, especially bears, for festive hunt	225	5 docs relating to the same request from two different agents		18	1 Nov. 1565	38
Bernardo Baroncelli informs Prince Francesco de'Medici of arrival of a civet and a gazelle	521a	DocID 9834		773	27 May 1566	39
Three birds from the Indies sent to Prince Francesco	4901	DocID 14311		no	1 Apr. 1567	40
Francesco advises Cosimo Bartoli to purchase a "gatto pardo" only if the animal is domesticated	229	DocID 19019		47	27 Nov. 1567	41

Francesco advises against purchase of the “gatto pardo”, as the animal is too unruly	229	DocID 19031		59	17 Dec. 1567	42
Francesco thanks Antonio Scaramuccia for the gift of a lion	229	DocID 19085		136	Mar 31, 1568	43
	229	DocID 19092		143	Apr. 11, 1568	44
Leonardo de’ Nobili informs Cosimo I of arrival of gosehawk from Zamora and sparrow hawks from India	4902	DocID 14380	Ins.1	27	5 May 1568	45
Francesco orders Bernardo Baroncelli to take charge of shipmento of numerous exotic animals at port in Livorno	229	DocID 19124		193	Jun 12, 1568	46
Francesco receives gift of a Turkish horse	538a	DocID 14744		737	4 Oct. 1568	47
Francseco receives gift of a monkey and a parrot from Spain	538a	DocID 14767		926	19 Oct. 1568	48
Algerian capitain Caragiali sends lion, leopard, ostrich monkey etc. as gift to Cosimo I	58	DocID 9519		50r.	12 Sept. 1569	49
Cosimo thanks Caragiali for the above	58	DocID 9516		49r.	10 Dec. 1569	50
Leonardo de’ Nobili asked by Francesco to procure birds from the Indies or sparrowhawks	4901	DocID 14336		No pagination	Aug. 14, 1570	51
	4901	DocID 14345		No pagination	Aug. 28, 1570	52
Gifts of a hare and a roe deer sent to Francesco’s daughter	1212	Doc.ID 17059	Ins.1	45r.	6 Sept. 1570	53
Parrots, long-tailed monkeys, small birds and a llama (‘Indian sheep’) sent by Cosimo I to Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria		Not on *The Medici Archive* database . Information: Detlef Heikamp, *Mexico and the Medici*, p.11			23 May 1572	54
Francesco sends lynx as gift to Antonio Scaramuccia	582	Doc.ID 22139		150	Dec. 13, 1572	55

Francesco informed of arrival of three canaries from Spain by Provveditore in Livorno	582	Doc.ID 22149		209	Dec. 15, 1572	56
Turtles sent as gifts to Joanna of Austria, wife of Francesco I	5923	Doc.ID 22022		250	Mar 31, 1574	57
Francesco I Apr 1574 - Oct 1587						
Ugolino Grifoni sends Indian fowl (probably turkeys)	5923	DocID 3499		215	Jan. 9, 1575	58
Birds from the Indies sent as gifts to Grand Duke Francesco I	4906	DocID 14222		144	Nov 10 1576	59
Gift of two parrots for Francesco I	693	DocID 17354		101	29 Nov. 1576	60
Francesco I receives gift of a gyrfalcon and a tercel	695	DocID 12561		16	Mar 13, 1577	61
Francesco I receives gift of two gazelles and a wild sheep (mouflon)	254	DocID 21252		118	Sept 22, 1580	62
Bill of landing notifies Francesco I of arrival of an ostrich and a gazelle	746	DocID 16969		205	Apr 11, 1581	63
Francesco I receives gift two sparrowhawks and a goshawk	257	DocID 15427		15	Aug 6, 1581	64
Female tiger and unspecified 'animaletto' sent as gifts to the Duke of Bavaria	257	Doc.ID 16090		30r.	9 Aug. 1581	65
Tiger dies, Francesco I sends another	257	DocID 13978		30r.	9 Sept 1581	66
Animal from the Indies (a 'lepre) sent to Ferdinand of Habsburg	257	Doc.ID 13969		30r.	9 Sept 1581	67
Francesco I receives gift of falcon	1212	Doc.ID 4242	Ins.2	346	5 Dec. 1581	68
Francesco I receives gift of 'lepre dell'Indie' (Indian hare)	1212	Doc.ID 4254	Ins.3	468r.& v.	23 Apr. 1582	69

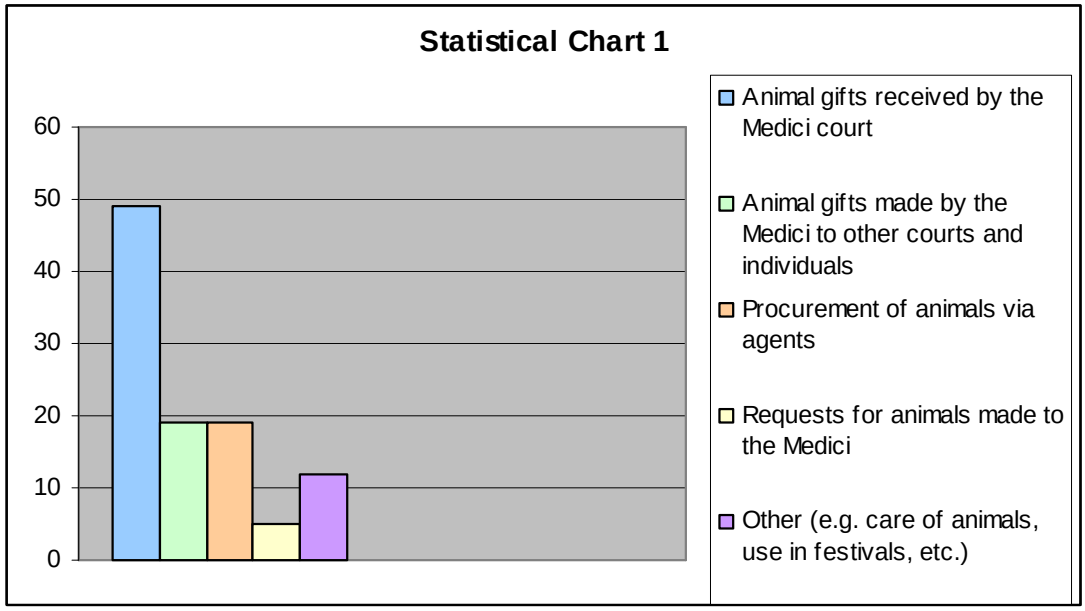
Francesco I receives gift of horse, hounds and a gazelle	257	Doc.ID 13951		177v.	16 July 1582	70
Francesco I receives gift of birds (presumably South American) and a Peruvian pig. The latter dies during transport.	1212	Doc.ID 4269	Ins.4	676r.	17 Apr. 1584	71
	1212	Doc.ID 4273	Ins.4	712r.	20 July 1584	72
Francesco I sends gift of two lions to Prince Vincenzo Gonzaga	2939	Doc.ID 4471		No pagination recto	17 May 1585	72
Francesco I declines offer of leopards, as is well supplied with such animals	269	Doc.ID 19718		13	28 Mar. 1586	74
'Cose curiose' sent to Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici	1234	Doc.ID 15201	Ins.4	no	6 May 1587	75
Francesco I receives gift of four 'gran bestie'(elks) from Lorenzo Cagniuoli in Sweden	270	Doc.ID 16527		110r.	5 June 1587	76
	270	Doc.ID 16540		126v.	1 July 1587	77
Ferdinando I Oct 1587- Feb 1609						
Ferdinando I receives gift of birds from Slavonija	4051	Doc.ID 23510		542	July 18, 1588	78
Ferdinando I receives gift of bears	280	Doc.ID 391		76v.	26 July 1591	79
Movement of ram, ostrich, and steinbock from Bologna to Pratolino (expenses)	280	Doc.ID 7358		88v.	30 Aug 1591	80
	280	Doc.ID 16653		89	31 Aug 1591	81
Ferdinando I receives gift of white peacock	280	Doc.ID 7359		88v.	31 Aug. 1591	82
Ferdinando I receives gift of horses, parrot, dogs	282	Doc.ID 712		126	5 Mar. 1592	83
Ferdinando I receives gift of birds and other exotic curiosities from Seville	282	Doc.ID 16739		135	Apr 30, 1592	84

Ferdinando I promises to send white peacocks and Indian ducks to the Duchesse of Mantua	282	Doc.ID 16779		187	Oct 9, 1592	85
	2942	DocID 4916		-	Sept 29, 1593	86
Ferdinando I receives gift of tame lynx	4051	Doc.ID 22552		705	Jul 27, 1599	87
Ferdinando I sends gift of unspecified animals to Prince Francesco IV Gonzaga	2943	DocID 5023			7 July 1603	88
	6107	Doc.ID 16500		83	Aug 3, 1603	89
Ferdinando I sends gift of one tiger and four leopards to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, together with a promise to send more	300	Doc.ID 1847		39r. and v.	5 May 1607	90
	300	Doc.ID 13811		67r.	4 July 1607	91
	5052	Doc.ID 14860		471	23 Sept 1607	92
Ferdinando I receives gift of exotic birds and horses from Filippe III of Spain	5052	Doc.ID 635		545	27 Jan. 1608	93
Cosimo II Feb 1609 - Feb 1621						
Vincenzo I Gonzaga sends two leopards (male and female) to the new Grand Duke Cosimo II de' Medici	2944	Doc.ID 5114		673	25 Apr. 1609	94
Cosimo II receives gift of a young slave from Francesco IV Gonzaga	2946	DocID 5202		164	May 25 1611	--
Report of '*caccia* di lioni' in Florence	4866	DocID 18209		130r.	13 Oct. 1616	95
Report of spectacle involving dances with costumed monkeys at Castello	6108	DocID 6768		999r.-v.	12 Jun 1618	96
Ferdinando II Feb 1621 - May 1670						
Duke of Mantua sends two leopards as gift to Ferdinando II de' Medici	2956	DocID 5801	Ins. 4	no	13 May 1624	97
Cascia Pascià, the Pasha (Mamet) of Tripoli sends Ferdinando II horses, lions, tigers, leopards, civets, ostriches	4274	DocID 22160	Ins.4	220 377 * not online)	18 Sept, 1637	98

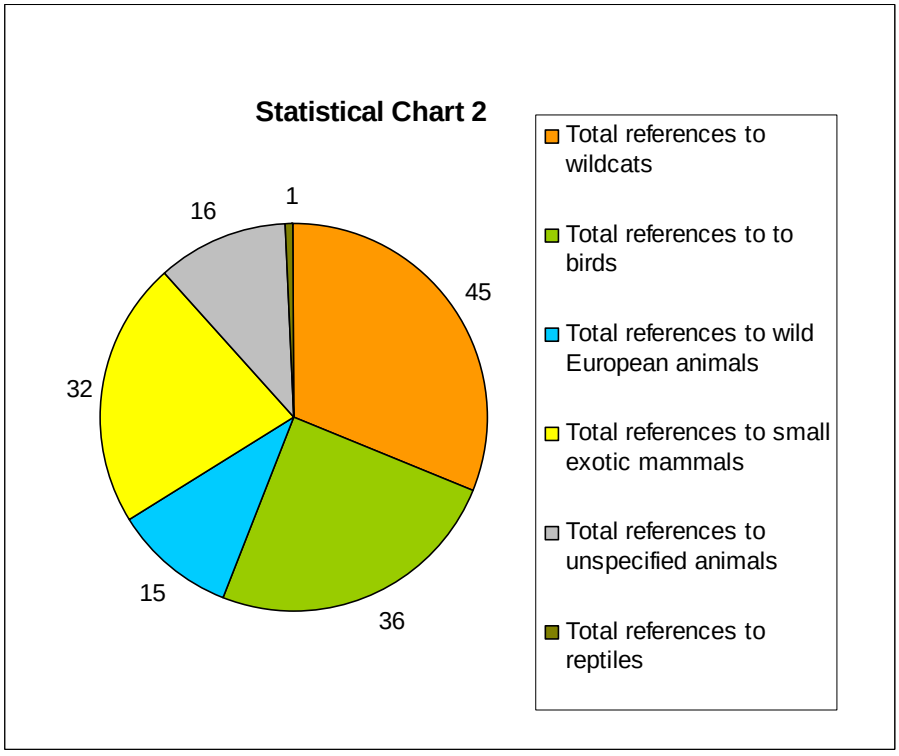
Alibi, son of Cascia Pascià, sends a civet cat	1082	DocID 17777	Ins.1	279and 282	---1659	99
Regiep Bey from Tripoli sends Ferdinando II antelopes and many other exotic beasts	1082	DocID 17814	Ins.2	645 penciled number	10 May 1662	100
Cosimo III May 1670 - October 1723						
Tiger parrot	1132	**Not on *The Medici Archive Project* database**[6]		209	12 Jan. 1672	101
Lions	1132	**Not on *The Medici Archive Project* database**		298	9 Nov. 1673	102
White pheasant	1132	**Not on *The Medici Archive Project* database**		427	1675	103
Partridge fr. Smyrna	1132	**Not on *The Medici Archive Project* database**		435	1675	104

[6] These documents are noted in Maria Matilde Simari 'Menageries in Medicean Florence', in *Natura Viva in Casa Medici: Dipinti di animali dai depositi di Palazzo Pitti con esemplari del Museo zoologico "La Specola"*, (exhib. cat.)), Marilena Mosco, Maria Simari et al, Firenze: Centro Di, 1985, pp.27-29 (p.29, fn.18).

APPENDIX - 7

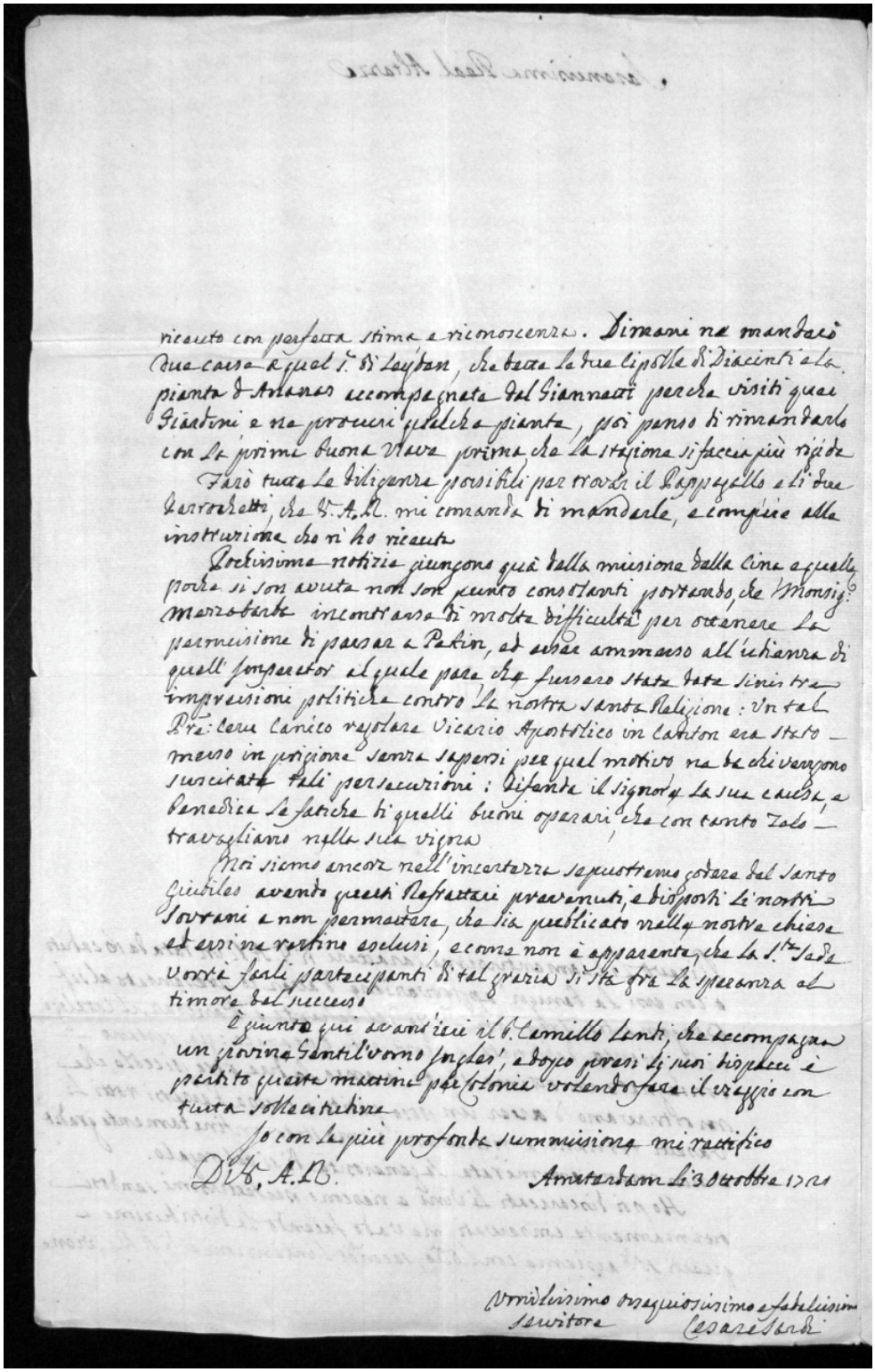


Statistical Chart 1: Statistical breakdown of contexts to which the Medici documents refer (e.g. gift, procurement etc.).



Statistical Chart 2: Statistical breakdown of animal categories that are referred to in the Medici documents.

APPENDIX - 8

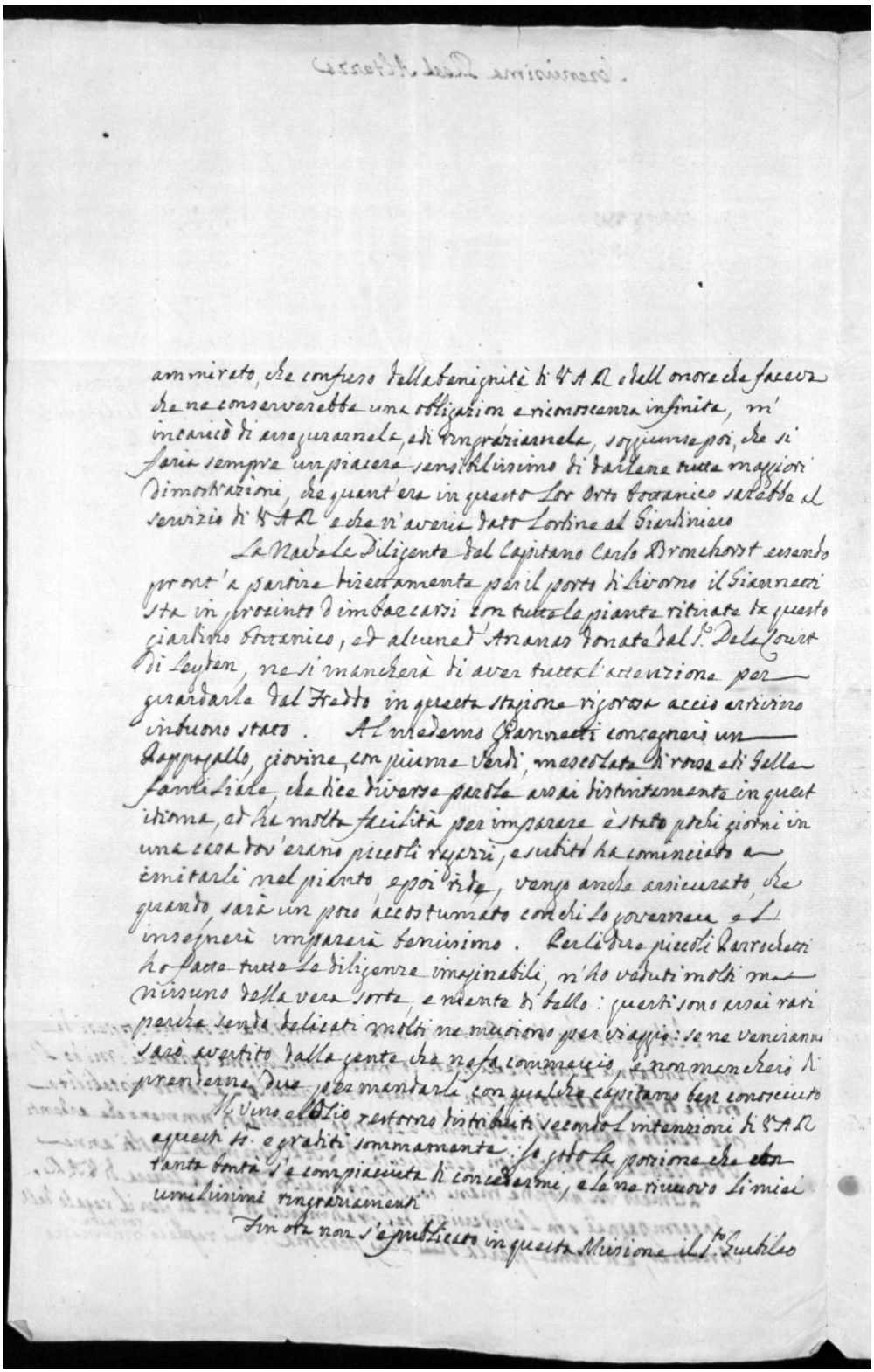


ricevuto con perfetta stima e riconoscenza. Dimani ne manderò
due casse a quel S.r Di Leyden, che hebbe le due cipolle di Diaconti e la
pianta d'Ananas accompagnata dal Giannetti perchè visiti quei
Giardini e ne procuri qualche pianta, poi penso di rimandarlo
con le prime buone Navi prima che la stagione si faccia più rigida
Farò tutta la diligenza possibile per trovar il Rappezello e li due
Garzoncelli, che V. A. R. mi comanda di mandarle, e compirò alla
instruzione che ni ho ricevuta
Freschissime notizie giungono quà dalla missione dalla Cina e quelle
parte si son avuta non solo quanto constanti portando, che Monsig.
Mezzobarba incontrasse di molta difficultà per ottenere la
permissione di passar a Pekin, ed ebbe ammesso all'udienza di
quell'Imperator al quale fece dare state date sinistre
impressioni politiche contro la nostra santa Religione: Un tal
P.re Gerardo Cenico vescovo Vicario Apostolico in Canton era stato
messo in prigione senza sapersi per quel motivo ne da chi venuto
suscitata tali persecuzioni: difenda il Signore la sua causa, e
benedica le fatiche di quelli buoni operari, che con tanto Zelo
travagliano nella sua vigna
Noi siamo ancora nell'incertezza se questi Reggenti godano del santo
Giubileo avendo questi Reggenti prevenuti, e disposti li nostri
Sovrani a non permettere, che sia pubblicato nella nostra chiesa
et essi ne restino esclusi, e come non è apparente, che la S.ta Sede
voglia farli partecipanti di tal grazia si sta fra la speranza et
timore del successo
È giunto qui ieri sera il S.r Camillo Lenti, che accompagna
un giovine Gentil'huomo Inglese, e dopo fermarsi di suoi bisogni è
partito questa mattina per Olanda volendo fare il viaggio con
tutta sollecitudine
Io con la più profonda sommissione mi raccomando
Di V. A. R.
Amsterdam li 3 Ottobre 1720

Umilissimo obsequiosissimo e fedelissimo
servitore
Cesare Sardi

Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (3 October 1720), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 259v.

APPENDIX - 9



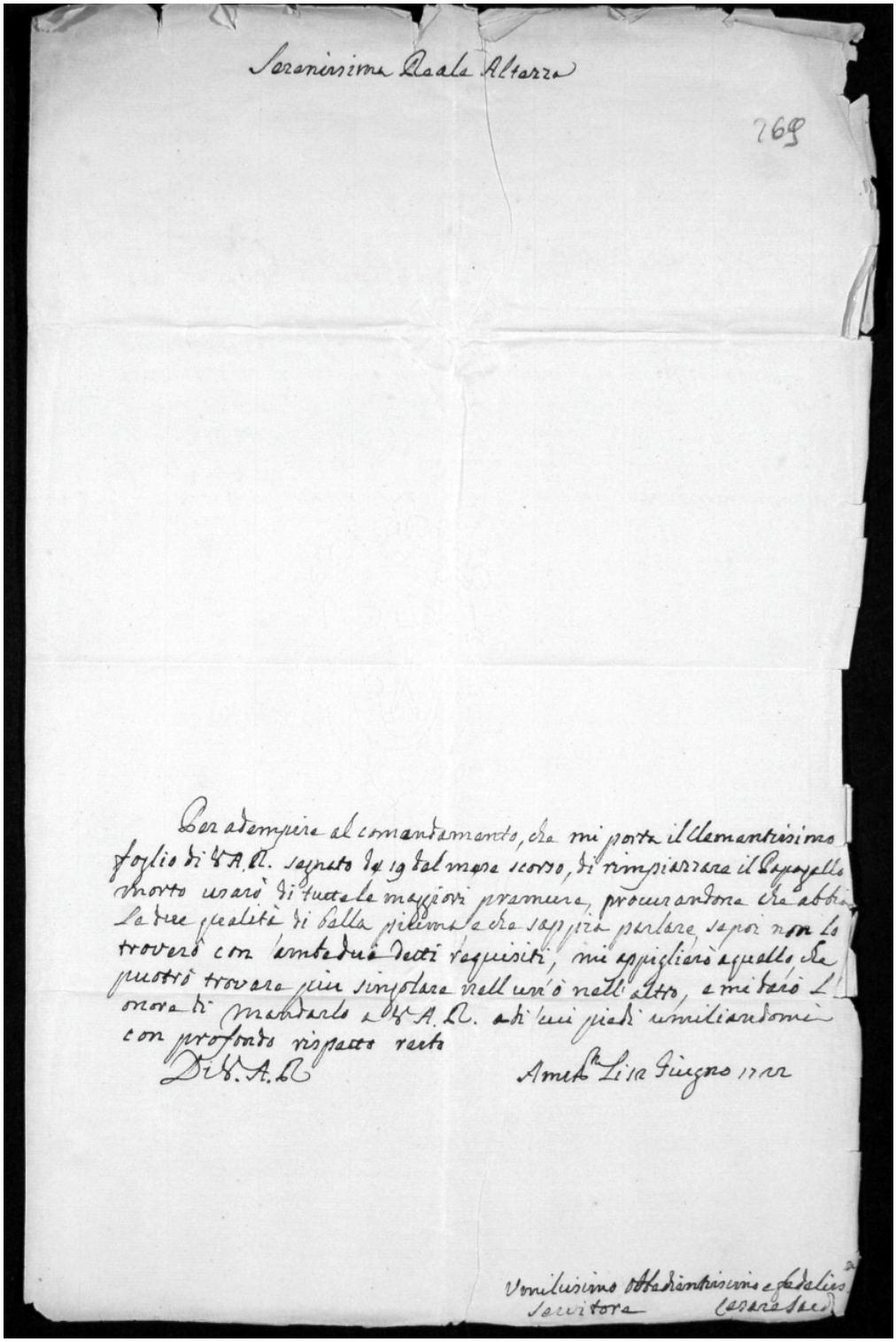
ammirato, che confuso dalla benignità di V.A.R. e dell'onore che faceva
che ne conserverebbe una obligazion e riconoscenza infinita, m'
incaricò di assicurarnela, ed ringraziarnela, soggiunse poi, che si
farìa sempre un piacere sensibilissimo di darliene tutte maggiori
dimostrazioni, che quant'era in questo Suo Orto Botanico sarebbe al
servizio di V.A.R. e che n'averìa dato Ordine al Giardiniere.

La Nave la Diligente dal Capitano Carlo Bronchorst essendo
pronta a partire direttamente per il porto di Livorno il Giardiniere
sta in procinto d'imbarcarvi con tutte le piante ritirate da questo
giardino Botanico, ed alcune d'Ananas donate dal Sig.r De la Court
di Leyden, ne si mancherà di aver tutta l'attenzione per
guardarle dal Freddo in questa stagione rigorosa acciò arrivino
in buono stato. Al medesimo Giardiniere consegnerò un
Ragazzo, giovine, con nome Cesare Sardi, mascolato di rosa di Gelle
fanciullesche, che hà diverse parole assai distintamente in quest
idioma, ed ha molta facilità per imparare è stato pochi giorni in
una casa dove erano piccoli figliuoli, e subito ha cominciato a
imitarli nel piccolo apprendere, vengo anche assicurato, che
quando sarà un poco accostumato con chi lo governerà e l'
insegnerà imparerà benissimo. Per libro piccolo Giardiniere
ho fatto tutte le diligenze imaginabili, n'ho veduti molti ma
nissuno della vera sorte, e niente di bello: questi sono assai rari
perche sendo delicati molti ne muoiono per viaggio: se ne venisse
sarò avertito dalla gente che nella commercio, e non mancherò di
prenderne due, per mandarle con qualche capitano ben conosciuto
Il Vino e Olio restorno distribuiti secondo l'intenzioni di V.A.R.
aquesti di cui gratii sommamente. Io sotto la protezione che ebbi
tanta bontà d'accompiacersi di concedermi, e le ne rinnovo li miei
umilissimi ringraziamenti.

Fin ora non s'è pubblicato in questa Missione il Giubileo

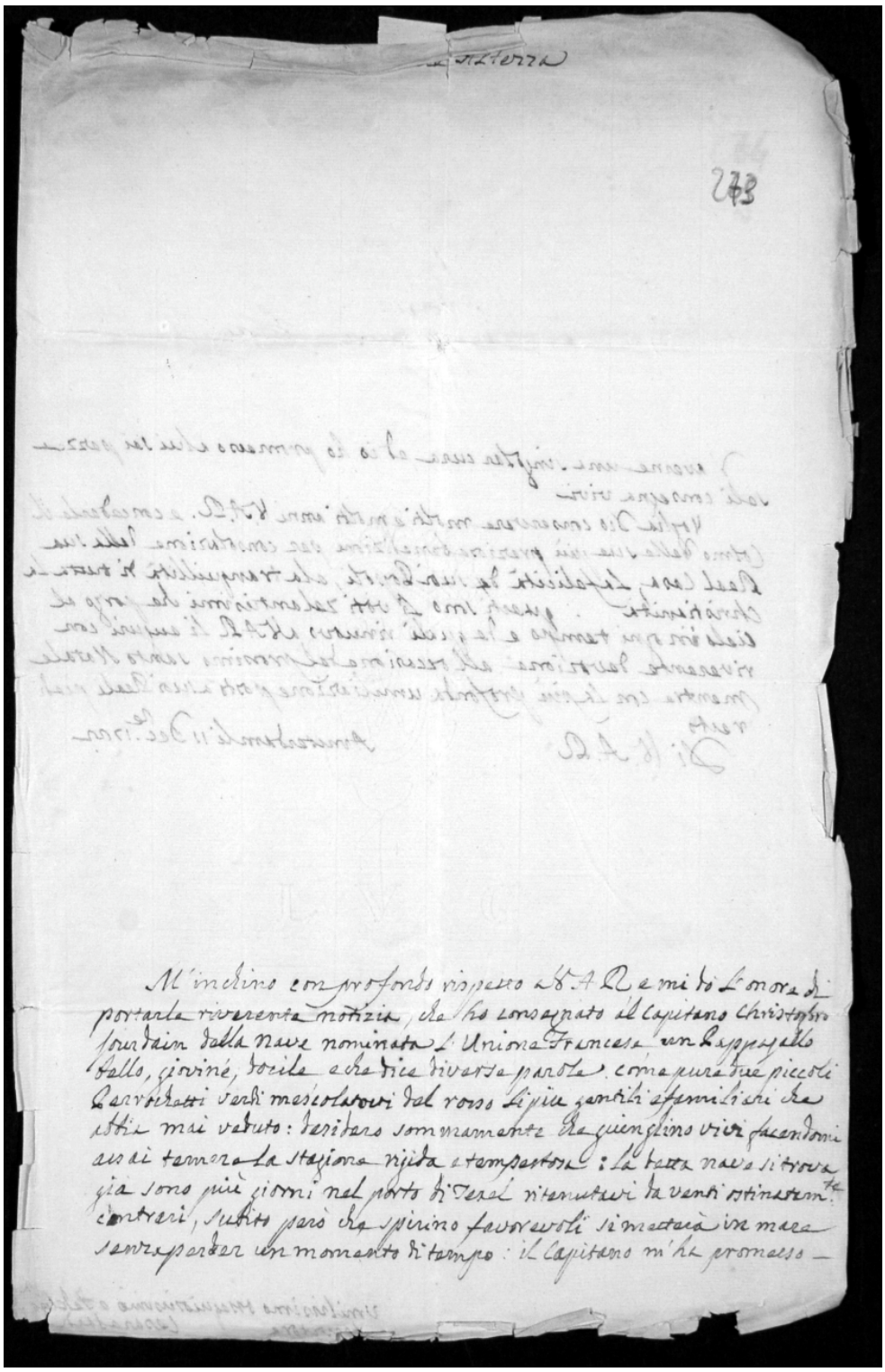
Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (28 November 1721), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 261v.

APPENDIX - 10

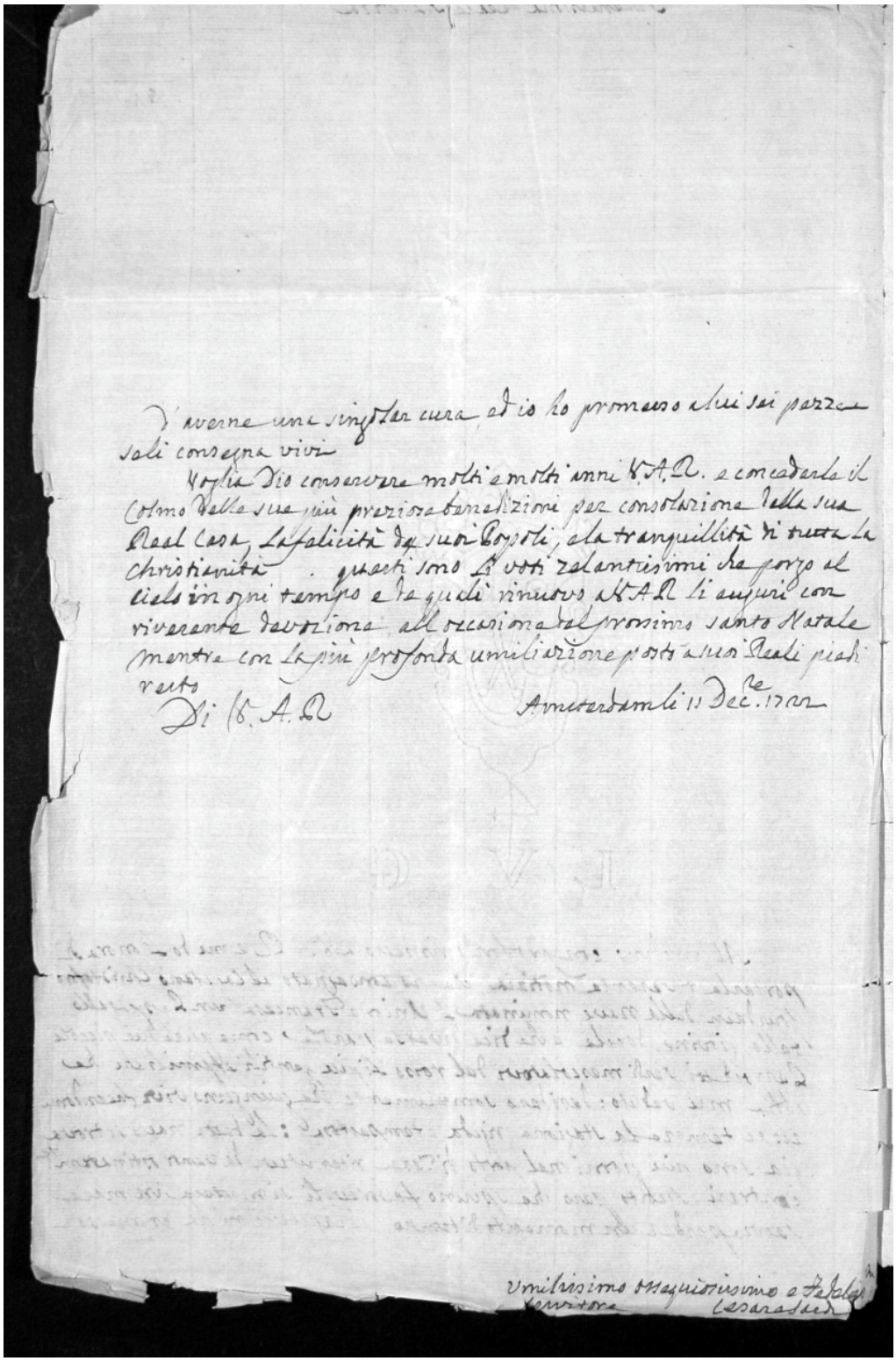


Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (12 June 1722), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 269r.

APPENDIX - 11

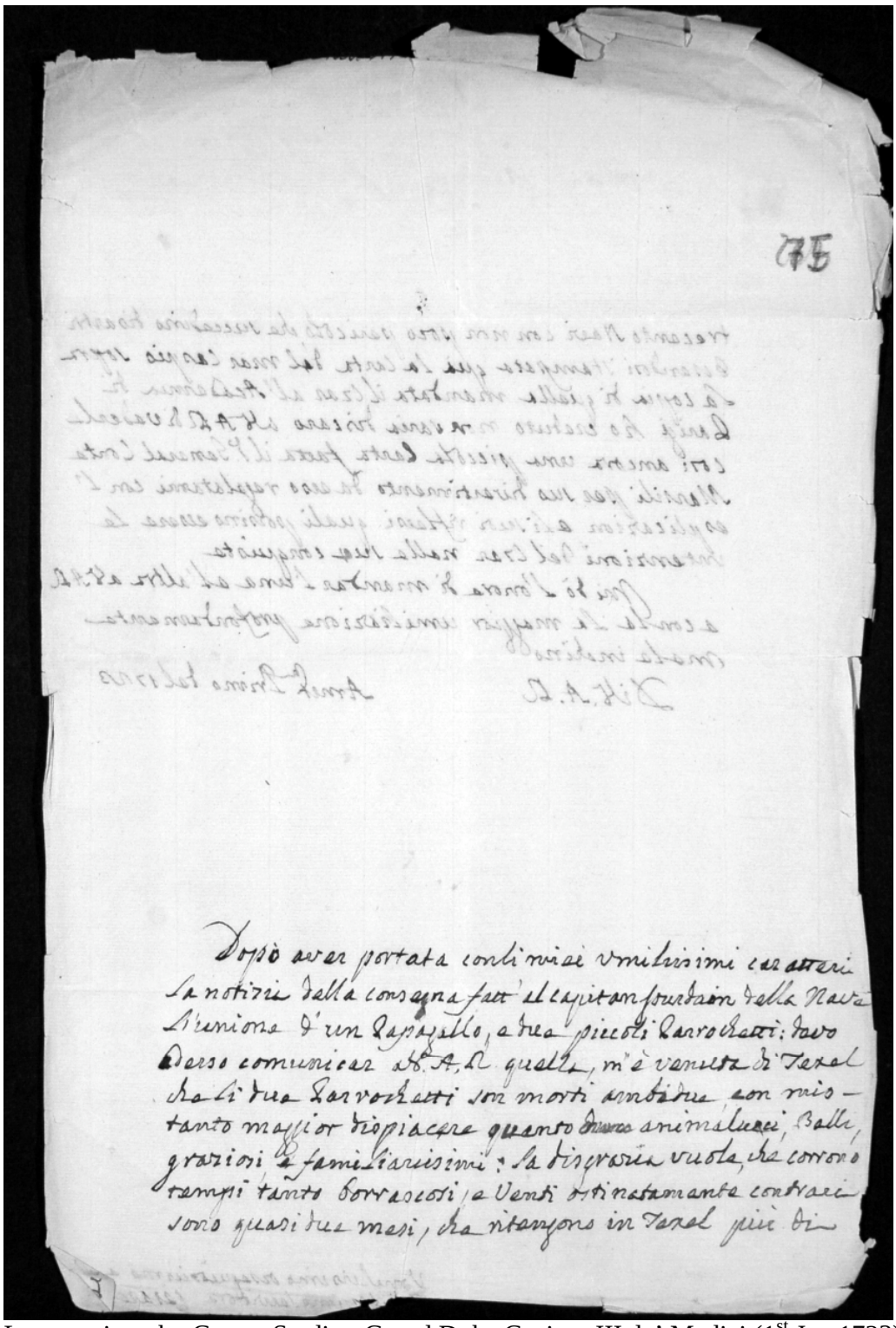


Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (11 December 1722), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 273r.



Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (11 December 1722), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 273v.

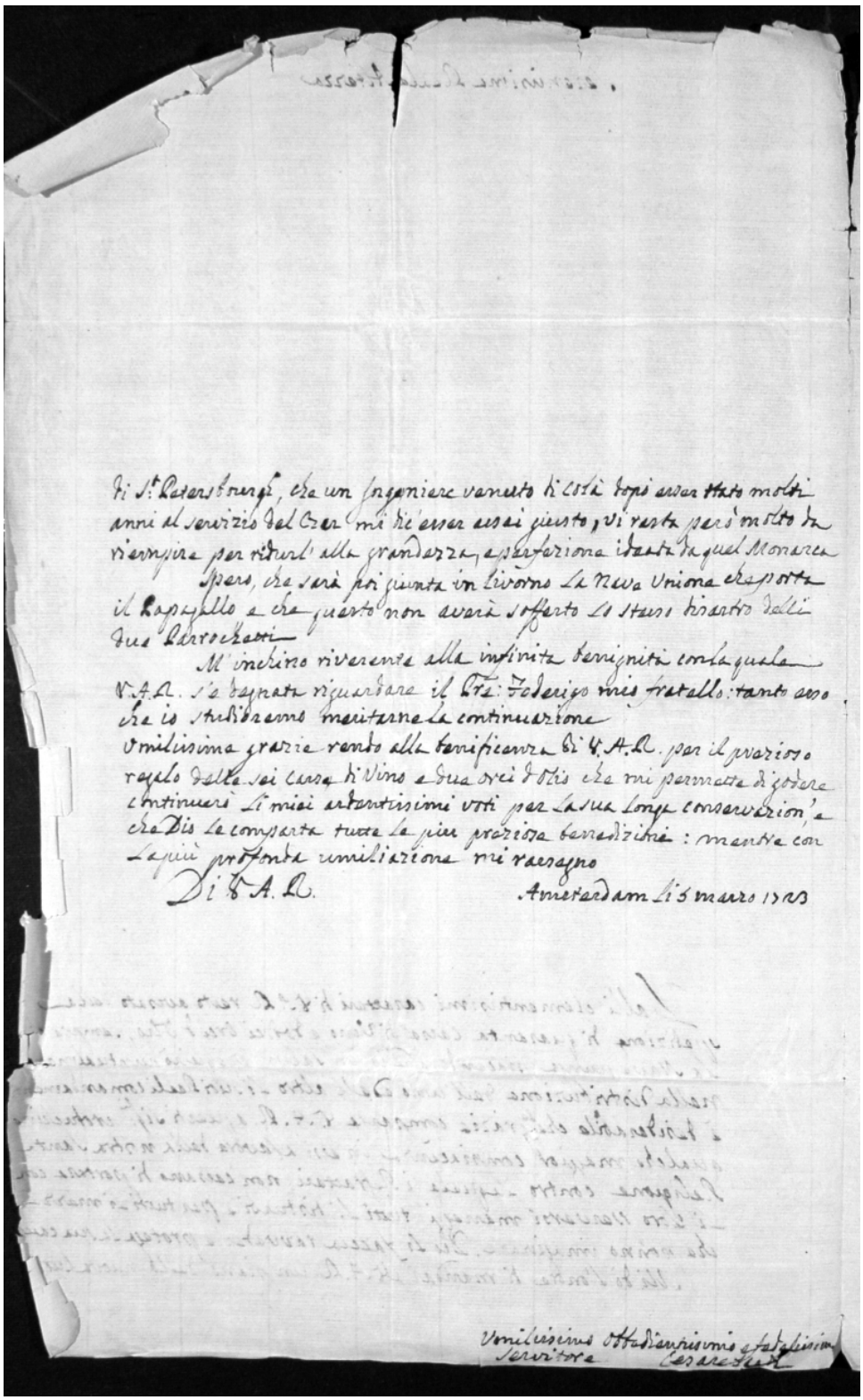
APPENDIX - 12



Dopò aver portata con li miei umilissimi caratteri
la notizia dalla consegna fatt' al capitan Gordon della Nave
Reunione d'un Rapporto, a tre piccoli Bastimenti: Havo
desso comunicar da S.A.R. quello, m'è venuto di Texel
che li due Bastimenti son morti ambidue con mio
tanto maggior dispiacere quanto erano animaletti, Belli,
graziosi & famigliarissimi: la disgrazia vuole, che corrono
tempi tanto borrascosi, e Venti ostinatamente contrarij
sono quasi due mesi, che ritengono in Texel più di

Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (1st Jan 1723), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 275r.

APPENDIX - 13



di St. Petersbourg, che un Ingegniere veneto di costà dopo essersi stato molti anni al servizio del Czar mi ha detto esser assai giusto, vi resta però molto da riempire per ridurlo alla grandezza, e perfezione ideata da quel Monarca

Spero, che sarà giunta in Livorno la Nuova Unione che apporta il Raffaello e che questo non avrà sofferto lo stesso disastro delli due Parrocchetti

Mi inchino riverente alla infinita benignità con la quale V.A.R. s'è degnata riguardare il Sig.r Federigo mio fratello: tanto avrò che io stabilirami meritarne la continuazione

Umilissima grazie rendo alla benificenza di V.A.R. per il prezioso regalo della sei casse di Vino e due orci d'Olio che mi permette di godere continuerò li miei ardentissimi voti per la sua longa conservazion, e che Dio le comparta tutte le più preziose benedizioni: mentre con la più profonda umiliazione mi raccomando

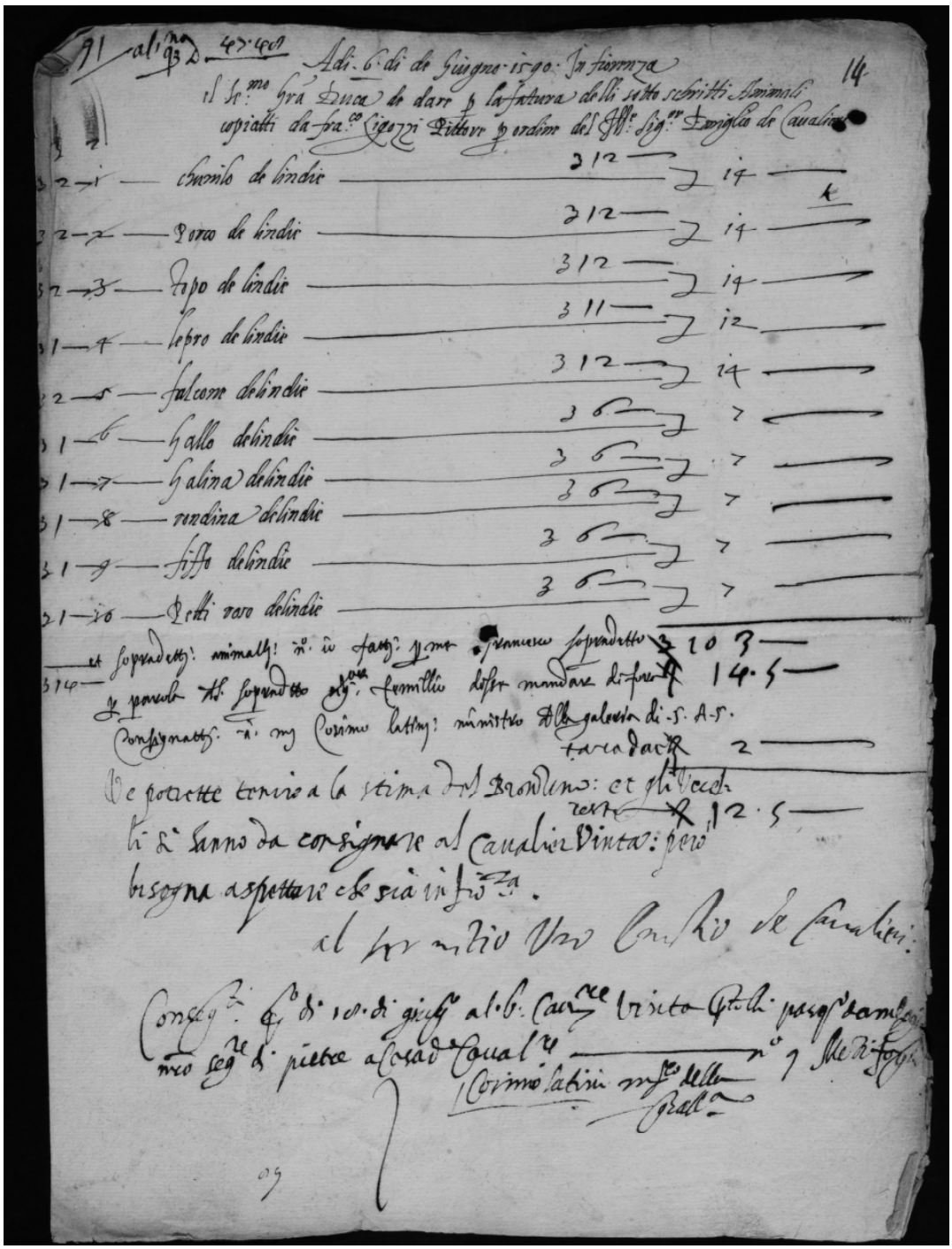
Di V.A.R.

Amsterdam li 5 marzo 1723

Umilissimo Obbedientissimo e fedelissimo Servitore Cesare Sardi

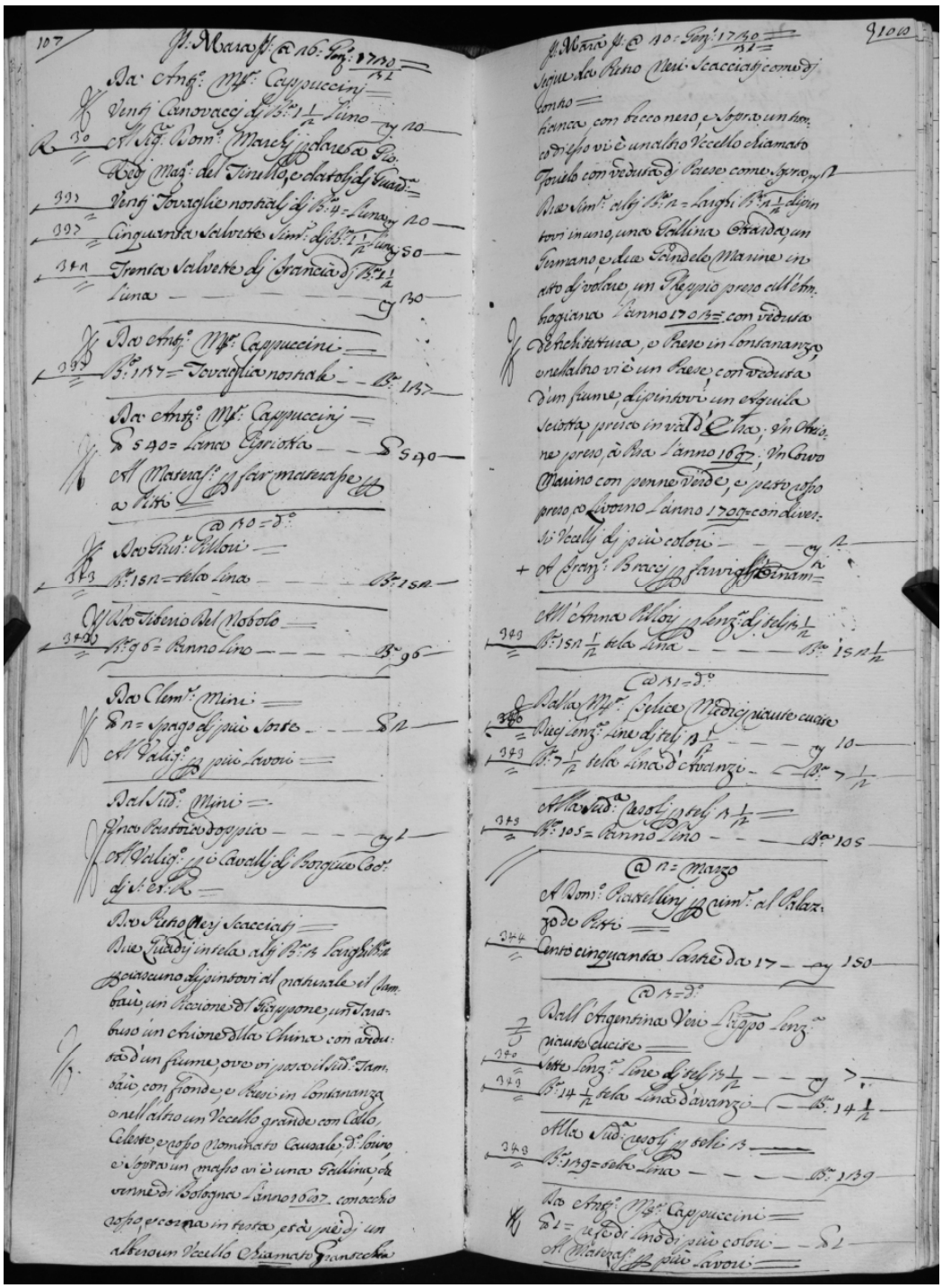
Letter written by Cesare Sardi to Grand Duke Cosimo III de' Medici (5 March 1723), ASF, Miscellanea Medicea, 92, Inserto IV, 277v.-278r.

APPENDIX - 14



Document dated 6 June 1590: Payment record noting that Francesco di Mercurio Ligozzi is to be paid for copying ten animal paintings created by Jacopo Ligozzi. The pictures were made to be sent to Ulisse Aldrovandi in Bologna. ASF Guardaroba Medicea (*Debitori a Creditori della Galleria dal Marzo 1590*), 184, Inserto 01, c.14 r.

APPENDIX - 15



Document dated 30 January 1731 referring to six paintings of animals by Pietro Neri Scacciati, destined for the villa Medici Ambrogiana,: ASF, Guardaroba Medicea 1343 (*Quaderno della Guardaroba Generale del Taglio di SAR. Primo. 1728-1732*), cc.l07v.-108r.

APPENDIX - 16

Document dated 16 May 1731 referring to paintings of animals by Pietro Neri Scacciati, destined for the villa Medici Ambrogiana, ASF Guardaroba Medicea, 1350 (*Giornale della Guardaroba 1729-1736*), c.39 recto (left) and c.39 verso (right).